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JANUARY 1989

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# HARPER'S



## A FURY OF SYMBOLS

How the Sixties Erupted in One Man's Life

*By Joel Agee*

## SIGNING AWAY CANADA'S SOUL

Culture, Identity, and the Free-Trade Agreement

*By Robertson Davies*

## WHEN YOU KICK A LIBERAL

A Post-Election Parable

*By Garrison Keillor*

## PEACE OF MIND

*A story by T. Coraghessan Boyle*

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ce to President Bush*

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# LETTERS

## A Sketchbook of Hype

While reading Lewis H. Lapham's essay "Skywriting" [May 1988] about the marketing of books, I was reminded that as long ago as 1809 Washington Irving used fantastic methods to promote one of his literary works.

From the Evening Post, October 26, 1809

## DISTRESSING

Left his lodgings some time since, and has not since been heard of, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of Knickerbocker. As there are some reasons for believing he is not entirely in his right mind, and as great anxiety is entertained about him, any information concerning him, left either at the Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street, or at the office of this paper, will be thankfully received.

Evening Post, November 6, 1809

Sir—Having read, in your paper of the 26th October last, a paragraph respecting an old gentleman by the name of Knickerbocker, who was missing from his lodgings; if it would be any relief to his friends, or furnish them with any clue to discover where he is, you may inform them that a person answering the description given was seen by the passengers of the Albany stage, early in the morning, about four or five weeks since, resting himself by the side of the road, a little above King's Bridge. He had in his hand a small bundle tied in a red bandana handkerchief; he appeared to be travelling northward, and was very much fatigued and exhausted.

A Traveller

Evening Post, November 16, 1809

Sir—You have been good enough to publish in your paper a paragraph about Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, who was missing so

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strangely some time since. Nothing satisfactory has been heard of the old gentleman since; but a very curious kind of a written book has been found in his room, in his own handwriting. Now I wish you to notice him, if he is still alive, that if he does not return and pay off his bill for boarding and lodging, I shall have to dispose of his book to satisfy me for the same.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,  
Seth Handaside,

Landlord of the Independent  
Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street

Evening Post, November 28, 1809

## LITERARY NOTICE

Inskeep & Bradford have in the press, and will shortly publish, *A History of New York*, in two volumes, duodecimo. Price three dollars. Containing an account of its discovery and settlement, . . . etc., etc., under the Dutch government . . .

This work was found in the chamber of Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the old gentleman whose sudden and mysterious disappearance has been noticed. It is published in order to discharge certain debts he has left behind.

*A History of New York*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker, appeared on December 6, 1809, after this promotion campaign. The book was immediately successful. After the hoax was exposed, everyone appeared delighted that W. Irving had, in fact, written the book.

Leslie Wilson  
Woodbridge, Conn.

## Super-Semitism

In remarks made to the leaders of major Jewish organizations in a breakfast meeting ["Kissinger Behind Closed Doors," Readings, June 1988], Henry Kissinger told his audience not to criticize the Israelis in public, and he advised the Israelis to exclude television journalists from the territories so that Israelis could, in effect, main

kill Palestinians and then plead defense. The Israeli government, its official reports of "incidents," now literally following Kissinger's vice.

George Steiner, as devoted a Zionist as Kissinger, distinguishes between Israel of promise and the Israel of iron fist ["A Jew's Grief," Readers, October 1988]. The first half of essay is an apologia; the second is a dissent from policies that beg from torture to censorship.

As Steiner suggests, Israeli "non-icity" requires that the Palestinians gain in political and economic serenade indefinitely or suffer the consequences: deportation, imprisonment without trial, harassment, destruction of their property, or even death. Why anyone—particularly Americans, who underwrite the daily brutality with up to \$8 million per in aid—can remain indifferent to these human-rights violations defies credulity. If Steiner could have the courage to write what he did and Israeli General Mattiahu Peled could look on this savaging of a population and call the Israelis the "Mongols of the Middle East," how can anyone remain silent? If anti-Semitism is the creed of the stupid and the perverse, might not indiscriminate promitism such as Kissinger's be the end of the accomplice?

Muel Hazo  
Cincinnati, Ohio

The territorial imperative of a greater Israel has supplanted the age-old bond between Jew and Arab. After forty years of wandering in the desert, the ancient Israelites saw the promised Land; after forty years of toil for today's Israelis, there is not even a glimpse of hope on the horizon.

John Zona  
Toronto, Canada

## Acting Like Animals

It's a funny world ["Just Like Us?" August 1988]. My Balinese boyfriend keeps fighting cocks but won't let me tell him the huge, ugly pregnant spiders in his house. When discussing how to

You deserve to have the facts about . . .

# A "Palestinian Homeland"

## Is it a valid aspiration or an unwarranted demand?

Once again, strife and trouble have erupted in Israel and in the territories administered by Israel. And many thoughtful people believe that these problems could be laid to rest, that tranquility could be restored if the "Palestinians" had their own country. That homeland would be Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza strip. Its capital would be Jerusalem or, at the very least, its "Arab sector."

## What are the facts?

■ First of all, some definitions are in order. The Arabs living in "Palestine" — which is Jordan, Israel and the areas administered by Israel — like to refer to themselves as "Palestinians", and to the Jews living there as "Jews". But all inhabitants of Palestine obviously are Palestinians — either Arab or Jewish Palestinians. By only referring to themselves, but not to the Jews, as "Palestinians", the Arabs attempt to convey legitimacy on themselves and illegitimacy on the Jews, despite the uninterrupted presence of Jews in all parts of Palestine since Biblical times.

■ In 1948, the Palestinian state of Jordan, in an act of naked aggression, invaded the just-born state of Israel. It managed to occupy Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem. For the next 19 years, and until 1967 when the territory came under Israeli administration after the Six-Day War, Judea/Samaria was part of the Kingdom of Jordan. During that entire time, nothing was ever heard of "Palestinian" peoplehood. The thought of creating a second "Palestinian" state in the "West Bank", in addition to the Palestinian state of Jordan, did not occur to anyone — certainly not to the "Palestinians", not to any of the 22 Arab countries, and not to the rest of the world.

■ By the relentless drumbeat of Arab propaganda, the impression has taken hold that the "Palestinians" in Judea/Samaria are a distinct and unique people. But that just isn't so. The concept of separate "Palestinian" peoplehood is a new one. It did not exist before 1967. The reality is that the so-called "Palestinians" in this area are exactly the same people — undifferentiated in dialect, dress, social customs or anything else — from the Palestinian Arabs in Jordan. A second Palestinian peoplehood is a myth. It was created for the purpose of laying claim to Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") in the first instance, and for its use as a launching pad for the destruction of Israel proper thereafter.

The "Palestinians" are not a distinct people. They are simply Arabs. They chafe under Israeli administration, however benevolent it may be. Scores of ethnic groups live under such conditions, many of them — in contrast to the Arabs under Israeli administration — under political duress, discrimination against them, and with their religion, language and identity suppressed. But the Palestinian Arabs do have a homeland. It's Jordan. Jordan is by far the largest part of Palestine. The Arabs living there are overwhelmingly Palestinians. The ultimate resolution of the problems of the Palestinian Arabs of the "West Bank" — a resolution that satisfies the irreducible security requirements of Israel and the national aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs — can only come about by direct negotiations. Under pressure of the PLO and of Arab rejectionists, the Palestinian Arabs have so far refused to participate in any such negotiations. Israel has been ready for them for over twenty years.

■ With the help of President Carter, Menachem Begin of Israel and Anwar Sadat of Egypt signed the Camp David Accords. In line with these Accords, Israel returned the entire Sinai Peninsula — including the valuable oil fields it had developed, two of the world's most advanced military bases, and several cities — to Egypt, in exchange for peace. And in the Camp David Accords it was agreed that the inhabitants of Judea/Samaria and the Gaza Strip would get autonomy and that during a five-year period, the final status of the territories would be negotiated. But that process never got started. Why not? To the Arabs, the Camp David Agreement is unacceptable, because it implies recognition of Israel. The Egyptians were drummed out of the Arab League, and most Arab countries broke relations with them, for having committed the unpardonable sin of making peace with Israel. For good measure, Anwar Sadat was assassinated by his own countrymen — a destiny shared with any other Arab who has dared to advocate recognition of or peace with Israel.

■ The real and never changing purpose of the Arabs is not the attainment of "the rights of the Palestinian people", autonomy in the administered territories, or even a state of their own in what is now called the "West Bank". The real purpose has never changed. It is the dismantling and the destruction of the state of Israel. To the Arabs, having a state of "infidels" on what they consider "sacred Arab soil" is a religious crime. Because of that, the Kurds, the Druze, the Copts, the Armenians, the Maronites and other minorities have all been brutally repressed and periodically massacred by the Moslem Arabs. But the Arabs' greatest hatred is directed toward the Jews. The wished-for establishment of a "Palestinian" state on the "West Bank" would be the first step toward the "final solution" desired by the Arabs. The PLO has never deviated, never wavered from that. The destruction of Israel, its "secularization" or its Lebanonization, are the unswerving core dogma of the PLO.

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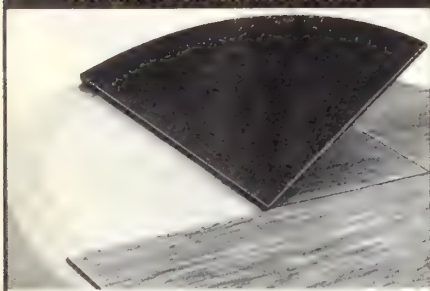
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get rid of the rats in the kitchen, or must speak in the high language served for kings and gods while preparing the poison.

Animal-rights advocates contribute to the growth of our moral consciousness by calling attention to the abuse and suffering of animals. Certainly some laws are necessary to curb cruel practices, but the notion of rights for animals sounds a little silly at a distance—one thinks of cows and pigs going to court. And there is a certain bray in the term "speciesist."

Arthur Caplan makes great sense throughout the discussion and exposes what seems to me the fundamental point—that we must deal with living creatures "out of a sense of fairness or a sense of humanity or sense of duty, but not out of a claim to rights."

This cogent plea for decency seems offensive to Ingrid Newkirk, who responds, "I don't like your supremacist view of a custodial responsibility that grants you the luxury to be magnanimous to those beneath you." Hear, hear!

Meanwhile, I feel my neck going red. Right this moment there are seventeen horny male dogs cruising my garden. Somebody else's bitch is in heat, and the dogs have apparently decided to have the gangbang at my house. From time to time the dead tropical lull is shattered by earsplitting dog shrieks and hi-fi drooping growling. Really, they carry on like animals. I sure hope animal rights don't come to my neighborhood too soon.

Diana Darling  
Bali, Indonesia

## Teenage Terrorists

It is beneath the dignity of a magazine such as yours to print Bill Schor's cartoon showing Israeli soldiers threatening to bulldoze the house of Dennis the Menace, who has been caught throwing stones [Reading, October 1988]. It is a vile, anti-Semitic cartoon reminiscent of Nazi propaganda tracts from the Thirties and many Soviet publications today.

For anyone, in these times, to even suggest that Israel bulldozes the home

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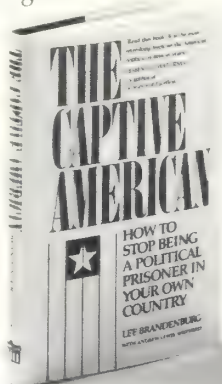
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eight-year-old children who throw stones is inexcusable. It is obvious to any observer that the stones and Molotov cocktails being hurled by teenage terrorists recruited by militant, cowardly, passive PLO supporters are intended to maim and kill. Israel is in a battle for survival, and bulldozing—for right or wrong—is a desperate resort used for incidents in which death or serious injury occur: in most cases by repeat offenders.

v. Sherwood Goffin  
New York, N.Y.

## Economic d.t.'s

The most skeptical voice in George Feifer's report, "The New God Will Kill" [October 1988], is his own. His skepticism is borne of the changes "perestroika" threatens to effect on the sophisticated professionals" and "Westernized cosmopolitans" who are in Moscow friends, on the "drab kitchens" of these friends (sentimentalized rooms where Feifer can escape the implicit American pressure to look successful and smile), and on the dissolved dream of his own achievement as a new John Reed. Feifer's friends are essential to his thesis, but these garrulous folks—if they are home at all, and not in Paris or chasing after the suddenly available rolls of toilet paper—begin to offer him newspapers in lieu of conversation.

His well-off friends are still verbose about the Russian workers, however, who are apparently as lazy, incapable, and drunk as ever. Gorbachev has only succeeded in plunging his country into the d.t.'s. Of course, if the Russians did begin to look successful and smile, where would George Feifer go to relax his American facial muscles? If his well-off friends end up running for their lives, as he imagines, whose drab kitchens will he eat and drink in, whose conversations will he edit into prophetic essays, and whom can he hope to rescue from communist despair? Feifer has reorganized his friends' conversations to voice his own nostalgic skepticism, and he trusts they will forgive him. Perhaps they will.

Nichelle Burnham  
Boston, Mass.

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# NOTEBOOK

Nouns and pronouns

By Lewis H. Lapham

*State business is a cruel trade; good-nature is a bungler in it.*

—Marquis of Halifax

**O**f all the lies that President-elect George Bush so obediently told during the autumn election campaign, none was more preposterous than the one about how he wished to change America into "a kinder and gentler nation." I can understand why a politician would tell the customary lies about clean water, lower taxes, and the flag; but what would prompt him to think that a nation—especially a nation remarkable for its military prowess and its frenzied devotion to money—can acquire the virtues properly associated only with individuals? An abstract noun neither smiles nor sings nor tells bedtime stories. The promise of human feeling on the part of any institution—whether a bank or an infantry regiment—debases the language and props up the effigy to whom George Orwell gave the name "Big Brother." When governments claim the rights of individuals (just as when individuals claim the prerogatives of government), it usually means that the rule of law has been supplanted by the rule of men.

The question remains as to what it was that Bush—or, more likely, his speechwriters—had in mind. Were they being cynical or elegiac? Had they become so contemptuous of native opinion as to think that by saying so they could change cruise missiles into birthday balloons? Or, having become frightened by what they had seen of the moral squalor of the Reagan administration, were they promoting a happy return to Christianity and the third grade?

Given the barbarous lessons of the twentieth century, I don't know how anybody can still pretend that any nation-state—whether American, Soviet, or Chinese—can afford the luxuries of mercy or compassion. Cruel by nature and dishonorable by definition, the state recognizes no law other than its own need. Were the state to be cast in an animal form it would be seen as a hideous and mutant thing—reptilian, stupid, rapacious, and half-blind.

Surely even Bush must know by now that the state doesn't play by the same rules as those in effect at Andover or a Connecticut country club. As director of the Central Intelligence Agency he presumably had occasion to reflect on the ways in which the United States was obliged to sacrifice human life and happiness (in Cambodia, say, or Iran) on the altar of its perceived interests. During the eight years of his service in President Reagan's household guard, Bush undoubtedly had further occasion to notice that the United States sometimes found it expedient to abandon its allies (among them Ferdinand Marcos and Manuel Noriega), debase its currency, default on its debts, repudiate its treaties, cheat its own citizens (of medical care, a school lunch, and a decent education), betray the principles of its Constitution (for reasons of state, in Nicaragua and Iran), forward the shipment of cocaine to Shreveport and points north, and lie—repeatedly and complacently—about the environmental catastrophe leaking out of the government's nuclear weapons factories in Ohio, Colorado, and South Carolina.

If this were not instruction enough, Bush certainly had occasion to study

the mechanics of political chicanery during the course of his presidential campaign. He proved to be a diligent apprentice.

Prior to the Republican convention in New Orleans last summer was thought that Bush didn't have much talent as a demagogue. Everybody knew that he would do and what he was told to do and say, but could he convince the television cameras?

The nominating conventions by comparison to the medieval practice of readying a knight for battle. Just as the knight's squires raised him on his horse and forced over his head an iron mask of power, so also the candidate's political valets dress him in glittering plates of armed cliché. At the Republicans in New Orleans, the mounting of Vice President George Bush presented the awful possibility of clownish parody. The plumed helmet was too big for the candidate's head and his grooms knew that he was likely to slide off the other side of the horse. Never was there a novice commander so unsuited to the illusion of command.

By all accounts a once decent person—attentive to his family and friends as well intentioned as the first son of school—Bush unfortunately possessed none of the attributes expected of an equestrian statue in a public park. His manner was that of the younger and perennial sophomore, and his voice, which was thin, carried an overtone of upper-class privilege in tennis clothes. Despite his considerable experience in government service, Bush conveyed the impression of boyish fecklessness undisturbed by the labor of thought.

Well aware of their candida-

aknesses, Bush's attendants in New Orleans relied on the arts of advertising. If they couldn't turn him into bronze or stone, they could transform him into a salable product, which, in commercial society, is the next best thing to immortality. The problem is so well understood by the political elites in New York and Washington that they spoke of Bush (as they also spoke of Dukakis) as if he were a soft drink, a spray cologne, or a Japanese car.

The marketing plan devised in New Orleans made use of the two principal strategies known to the planners of what Madison Avenue calls "message icons": "comparative advertising" (slurs directed at the competing product) and "brand-lagging" (lies about the wonders of one's own product). In the service of the former strategy the Republicans broadcast a series of television commercials depicting Governor Dukakis as a dreaming liberal sympathetic to hippies and as a dangerous fool who didn't know the difference between a Russian and a Smurf. The latter strategy entailed tying Bush to the saddle of his horse, padding his helmet with enough styrofoam to hold it in place (at least until November), and dressing him up in the costumes of the common man. Bush dutifully denied any connection to his point of social origin or to the monied interests that paid for the fabrication of his image, and for three months, following the script, he presented himself as a regular, straight-shooting kind of a guy who "cries easily" at sentimental movies, admires Loretta Lynn and the Oak Ridge Boys, pitches horseshoes, cares a lot for "mainstream values," subscribes to *Bassmaster* magazine, delights in his motorboat, and never misses *Monday Night Football*.

Never once during the campaign did Bush say or do anything that suggested gentleness or kindness. When he wasn't fatuous, he was dishonest. He slandered his opponent, mocked the generously idealistic tradition of American politics (a.k.a. the "Lords"), and wondered why women who received abortions weren't being sent to prison. As often as possible he appeared before small-town rallies in the company of Hollywood

strongmen, among them Arnold Schwarzenegger (a.k.a. "Conan the Barbarian"), who assured a crowd in Hackensack, New Jersey, that Bush was "no wimp." The endorsement implied that Bush could be relied upon to maim or kill anybody that his country ordered him to maim or kill.

Even so, despite the thousands of flags and the incessant spectacle of Bush waving a brave hello to the nation's bright and invincible future, I never could dispel the feeling that his smile was fraudulent and that Bush was frightened both by his political associates and his horse. Behind the visor of his plumed helmet, which looked to be made of tin instead of iron, I could too easily imagine him being afraid of what else he would be asked to do. How many other lies would he be forced to tell? Of the little that was left to him of his conscience, how much more would he be required to place in escrow?

In the same acceptance speech in which he promised to make America "a kinder and gentler nation," Bush also said, speaking of the American people as a whole, that "we must be good to one another." The phrase had a plaintive sound, as if Bush were speaking about himself and hoping that the American people would be good not to one another but to him. It is, I suspect, a forlorn hope.

Too many people have learned too well the brutish lessons of the twentieth century, and they have taken as their beau ideal not the strength of character once admired in a virtuous individual but the technological perfections of a nation-state. Encouraged by the squalid example of the Reagan administration, the captains of finance most closely identified with the spirit of the age aspire to the moral vacuum of the rigged stock deal and the slick ad campaign. A few days before Bush's election I was introduced to a representative member of the species—a young and callow investment manager, adept in the maneuvers of the leveraged buyout, the merger, the takeover, and the corporate raid. Having raised \$100 million for a university library and research laboratory, he had summoned a delegation of alumni to show them drawings of the buildings that he had endowed with

the ornament of his name.

The view looking west was of the Hudson River, and after the stewards had served the coffee and passed around the Cuban cigars, the host explained the advantages of setting oneself up as a government. Having adopted a program of deficit spending, and being comfortably burdened with a portfolio of heavy bank loans that he had no intention of paying off, he compared our federal fiscal policy with his dealings with restaurants and department stores. Because he had run up his debts to genuinely alarming levels, he had achieved, at least among the cognoscenti at Citibank and Le Cirque, a status comparable to that of Brazil.

What was especially fine about constituting oneself as a government, he said, was the way in which it relieved a fellow of a sense of guilt. He submitted the rapacity of his appetite (for power, for goods, for services) as proof of his magnanimity. It was expected of nation-states, he said, that they should live beyond their means, that they should be spendthrifts as well as liars and cheats. The dean of the university had provided him with a reading list, and he had collected an anthology of quotations from diplomatists as mordant as Francis Bacon and Georges Clemenceau.

"A state neither loves nor hates," he said. "It pursues its interests. You would be surprised how simple this makes the negotiations with women and children."

He was a man much pleased with himself, and at the time, I remember being reminded of Donald Trump. In retrospect I'm reminded of Vice President-elect Dan Quayle. It is to people such as these that Bush can expect to make his little speeches about "a kinder and gentler nation." No wonder he seems a trifle anxious when he frets about the state of the nation's imaginary soul. I think it probable that he cannot distinguish his enemies from his friends. He was elected as a constitutional deity—a wax figure made for television, meant to be briefly worshiped, and then, like the annual kings of the ancient corn harvest, sacrificed to the expedience of the moment and the changing of the political seasons. ■



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# HARPER'S INDEX

Chances that a corporate merger in 1980 was challenged by the federal government : 1 in 68

Chances that a corporate merger today will be challenged : 1 in 328

Total U.S. corporate debt, expressed as a percentage of corporate assets, in 1980 : 81

Today : 104

Percentage of Americans who say that they have more sympathy for business than for labor : 36

Percentage of Americans who have little or no sympathy for "people who get AIDS from homosexual activity" : 60

Chances that a homosexual teenage boy will attempt suicide : 1 in 3

Percentage of teenagers who say they want to be like their parents : 39

Number of the 83 Appeals Court judges appointed by Ronald Reagan who are white men : 75

Number of résumés the Heritage Foundation submitted to George Bush in November : 2,500

Percentage of U.S. Senators and Representatives who have been in office for more than four years : 73

Percentage of Politburo members who have been in office for more than four years : 25

Ratio of admirals to ships in the U.S. Navy in 1945 : 1:130

Today : 1:2

Portion of the U.S. population that is eligible for some form of veterans' benefits : 1/3

Percentage of the \$9,900,000 cost of converting the VA to a Cabinet department that will be spent on new signs : 86

Amount American Airlines saved in 1987 by eliminating one olive from each salad served in first class : \$40,000

Percentage of Palestinian journalists who have been questioned at least once by the Israeli government : 45

Percentage of Israeli Jews who favor transferring all Palestinians out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip : 49

Percentage increase, since 1987, in the number of Nicaraguans leaving the country : 276

Estimated amount that Nicaraguans living in the United States send home to their families each year : \$60,000,000

Amount Nicaragua earns each year from coffee exports : \$90,000,000

Chances that a rural Salvadoran had access to safe drinking water in 1980 : 2 in 5

Chances today : 1 in 5

Percentage of all Tiffany & Co. shopping bags that are manufactured in El Salvador : 75

Estimated value of the goods purchased by Americans through TV shopping channels last year : \$1,400,000,000

Number of Americans who have a lifetime subscription to *Reader's Digest* : 43,000

Percentage of book reviewers who say it is ethical to review a book without having finished it : 36

Estimated amount the British government spent worldwide to stop publication of *Spycatcher* : \$6,000,000

Number of Americans convicted of spying, since 1981 : 32

Number of dolphins, sea lions, and whales being trained in "surveillance and detection" by the Navy : 120

Pounds of fish consumed each day at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California : 125

Pounds of fish consumed each day at Le Bernardin restaurant in New York City : 400

Pounds of fat that cosmetic surgeons removed from Americans last year : 200,000

Percentage of runners who say they think about sex while running : 66

Percentage who say they think about running while having sex : 8

Average number of bunk-bed-related injuries each year in the United States : 26,000

Amount the town of Rolfe, Iowa, will pay anyone who builds a home there : \$1,200

Maximum fine for holding more than two garage sales per year in Highland Park, Texas : \$1,000

Federal funds budgeted to move the Reagans out of the White House : \$1,250,000

*Figures cited are the latest available as of November 1988. Sources are listed on page 75.  
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**Horowitz Plays Mozart** Piano Concerto No. 23; Sonata No. 13. La Scala Opera Orchestra/Giulini. DG DIGITAL 115436

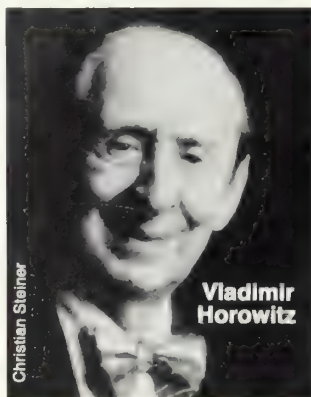
**Handel, Water Music** The English Concert/Pinnock. "Quite the best performance...now on the market."—Gramophone Archiv DIGITAL 115306

**Holst, The Planets** Montreal Symphony Orchestra/Dutoit. "The best available on both LP and CD."—Gramophone London DIGITAL 115448

**Andrew Lloyd Webber, Variations; more** Julian Lloyd Webber, cello. Philips DIGITAL 115473

**Vangelis: Direct** The Motion Of Stars, more. Arista 100470

**Tchaikovsky, 1812 Overture; Romeo & Juliet; Nutcracker Suite** Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Solti. London DIGITAL 125179



Christian Steiner

Vladimir Horowitz

**Handel, Messiah (Highlights)** Musica Sacra/Westenburg. Hallelujah Chorus, I Know That My Redeemer Liveth, more. RCA DIGITAL 153586

**Jascha Heifetz: Tchaikovsky & Mendelssohn, Violin Concertos** Chicago Symphony/Reiner; Boston Symphony/Munch. RCA 104833

**Ravel, Daphnis et Chloé (Complete)** Montreal Symphony/Dutoit. "An absolute dream performance."—Stereo Review London DIGITAL 115520



Sir Georg Solti

**Mozart, Overtures** Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields/Marriner. Don Giovanni, Marriage Of Figaro, 7 more. Angel DIGITAL 134267

**Brahms, Cello Sonatas** Yo-Yo Ma, cello; Emanuel Ax, piano. "Distinguished...handsomely recorded."—Stereo Review RCA DIGITAL 154044

**Kronos Quartet: White Man Sleeps** Music of Ives, Volans, Has-sell, Coleman, Johnston & Bartók. Nonesuch DIGITAL 140256

**Mozart, Requiem** Leipzig Radio Choir; Dresden State Orchestra/Schreier. "Exceptionally satisfying."—High Fidelity Philips DIGITAL 115039

**Slatkin Conducts Russian Showpieces** Pictures At An Exhibition, Classical Symphony, 3 more. RCA DIGITAL 154358

**Pops In Love** The Boston Pops/Williams. Clair de lune, Gymnopédies Nos. 1 & 2, Albinoni Adagio, Fantasia On Greensleeves, Pachelbel Canon, more. Philips DIGITAL 125230

**Michael Feinstein: Isn't It Romantic** Title song, How About You, My Favorite Year, A Fine Romance, 7 more. Elektra 172393

**Horowitz In Moscow** The historic return! Music by Scarlatti, Mozart, Rachmaninov, Liszt, Chopin, Scriabin, Schumann, others. DG DIGITAL 125264

**Mozart, The Piano Quartets** Beaux Arts Trio; Bruno Giuranna, viola. "Absolutely indispensable."—Stereo Review Philips DIGITAL 115271

**Copland, Billy The Kid & Rodeo (Complete Ballets)** Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra/Slatkin. Angel DIGITAL 141491

**The Canadian Brass: High, Bright, Light & Clear** Air On The G String, Masterpiece Theatre Theme, others. RCA DIGITAL 144529

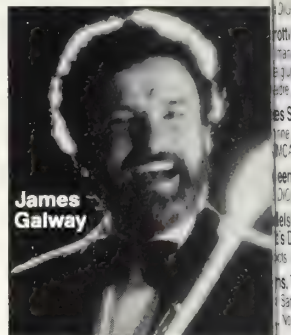
**Pops In Space** John Williams leads The Boston Pops in music from Star Wars, Close Encounters, Superman, more. Philips DIGITAL 105392

**Pachelbel, Canon in D** Also includes other works by Pachelbel & Fasch. Maurice André, trumpet; Pail-lard Chamber Orchestra. RCA 133877

**Gershwin, Rhapsody in Blue; An American In Paris; Con-certo** Pittsburgh Symphony/Previn (pianist & conductor). Philips DIGITAL 115437

**Vivaldi, The Four Seasons** English Concert/Pinnock. "The finest recording of [it] I've heard."—High Fidelity Archiv DIGITAL 115306

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**James Galway—Greatest Hits** Memory, Angel Of Music, Perhaps Love, Clair de lune, The Pink Panther, Sabre Dance, Danny Boy, 13 more. RCA 173233

**Dvořák, Symphony No. 9 (From The New World)** Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Solti. London DIGITAL 115168

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song, others. RCA/Novus 100494

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# READINGS

[Speech]

## UNCLE SAM, STAY HOME

*Adapted from a speech given by Carlos Fuentes last May at Bard College in Ammandale-on-Hudson, New York. Fuentes, who is Mexican, is the author of the novel The Old Gringo.*

**A**s the United States inaugurates a new president, this is a good time to look back on mistakes and lost opportunities in Latin America, so as not to repeat the former and so as to recapture the latter.

The primary reason for these recent failures is the United States' unique obsession with events in Central America, particularly in Nicaragua. The last administration—despite eight years of feverish activity, rattling rhetoric, and millions of dollars spent—failed to overthrow the government in Managua. The administration also failed to defeat the rebels in El Salvador. Moreover, the Reagan approach failed to bend the independent will of President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica or to pressure him into abandoning either his own territories or his policies favoring the use of diplomacy over the use of force. It should be noted, too, that all the rhetoric and military spending failed to prevent violent outbreaks against the U.S. presence in Honduras; and in Panama, the Reagan administration put forth a blundering policy which, instead of overthrowing General Noriega, has overthrown the Panamanian economy.

General Noriega would now be out of power if the United States had respected the diplomatic initiatives of November 1987 by the former presidents of Venezuela, Colombia, and Costa Rica. Noriega had agreed to leave in May of 1988, without losing face and without U.S. pressure. But the United States decided that it,

and not Latin America, should appear to be the determining factor in Noriega's departure.

The Bush administration must seriously ask itself what it wants in Latin America: peace through security arrangements, diplomacy, and cooperation with independent governments; or war through proxy armies, subservient governments, and alienated populations. And it must ask with whom it is most likely to achieve what it wants.

We share a hemisphere of enormous contrasts and vast inequalities—not the least of which is the asymmetry of power between Latin America and the United States. This is why we in Latin America have sought mightily to arrive at diplomatic arrangements that would equalize our relationships with other countries and limit the power of the United States within mutually acceptable bounds. Each country in Central America is struggling to define its own national identity and its own strategies of problem solving. Change is the name of the game, and there is more to come. We are not your enemies; we simply know the ground better than you do; we remember more than you do.

We live in a Latin America of paradox and crisis. A region of simultaneous stagnation and unchecked growth; one where reforms are no sooner initiated than they are postponed. But despite this crisis we are moving toward a new Latin America that looks beyond the tripod of Iberian conquest, a society dominated by church, army, and oligarchy. We are moving toward a new economics and a new politics—a democracy, but one drawn from Iberian, not Anglo-Saxon, traditions. New institutions wrought not just through elections but through revolution and evolution, through mass movements and insurgency. Our crisis has spawned a new model of development and, along with that, a new approach to our international relationships.

All of this marks the present reality of Latin



from *Playing Fast and Loose With Time and Space*, a collection of cartoons by P. S. Mueller, published this month by Meadowbrook Press in Deephaven, Minnesota.

America. Latin America is becoming at once more independent and more unified—in spite of economic crisis, political change, and an erosion of inter-American relations—as our role in the world diversifies and the influence of the United States shrinks in our region.

The United States, for example, now accounts for only one-quarter of all foreign investment in Latin America, down from three-quarters thirty years ago. And U.S. aid is proportionally down from 70 percent twenty years ago to 30 percent today, while investment and aid from Japan and Western Europe are growing exponentially. Trade between Japan and Latin America has increased by a factor of twenty since the late 1960s, and Japanese capital is fueling the development of Mexico's industrial ports, its Pacific resorts, its industries, and its debt-for-equity schemes. We are preparing to enter the Pacific Basin community, and upper- and middle-class Mexicans now send their children to learn not French or English but Japanese in our high schools. Today more than half of the world's trade is transacted in the Pacific. Latin America hopes to participate in this great commercial expansion.

We are also looking toward Western Europe. Speaking at Harvard University recently, the Prime Minister of Spain, Felipe Gonzalez, reminded his audience that the New World,

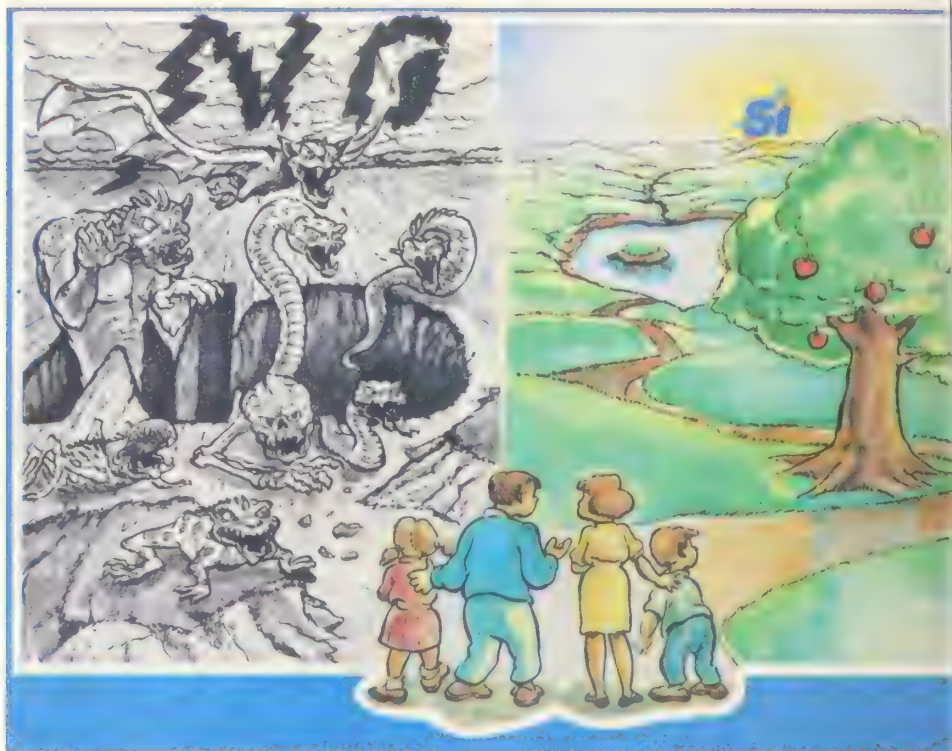
whose quincenarian we will be celebrating in 1992, was first the Iberian New World. Only later did it also become the Anglo-Saxon New World; but in any case, no other region of the world outside Europe resembles Europe so much as the Americas. Gonzalez proposed that Western Europe join both Americas, Ibero-America and Anglo-America, in a trilateral partnership, whereby we would cooperate more closely, cushion our hemispheric differences through European mediation, and pool our resources.

This leads me to the question of Latin America's place in the world, and its place alongside the United States, in cooperation, not subjugation. Today multilateralism shapes our international outlook. It is imperative that we strengthen international organizations and insist on adherence to the rule of law in international relations.

We, in Latin America, know that our best shield against the excessive power of the United States has always been the law. Our problem is getting the United States to join us, the weaker neighbors, in respecting the laws, treaties, and institutions that we've mutually agreed upon. We have done it before, we can do it again.

In fact, this has been the only successful hemispheric policy. The Good Neighbor Policy guided your actions when your presidents were Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman; your





From "Which Way Are You Going?" a pamphlet distributed as a newspaper insert prior to the Chilean plebiscite last fall. The pamphlet urged citizens to vote "Yes" for another eight-year term for President Augusto Pinochet lost by a vote of 55 to 43 percent.

secretaries of state, Dean Acheson and George Marshall; your under-secretary of state, Sumner Welles; and your coordinator of inter-American affairs, Nelson Rockefeller. These kind of men exist today. They are simply not being employed. Or, if brought to government, they are chased out by ideology triumphant, which will not tolerate reason, compromise, and shared objectives. The ideologue banks on force; he achieves weakness. He demands dogmatic purity; he ends up with political measles. He prophesies disaster, and the prophecy is fulfilled.

**T**he United States is no longer sovereign in this hemisphere. Latin America invites the United States to join in developing the legal, diplomatic, economic, and political relations appropriate to a new era in world affairs; and to give full attention to the key issues on which the future depends: debt, drugs, and migration.

Debt is stunting growth, depriving new Latin democracies of legitimacy, and eroding the social fabric. Everyone in Latin America is convinced that as currently structured, the debt will not be paid. Nevertheless, intelligent solutions must be found, but this will happen only if we

come together seriously and decide to pardon debt selectively, to lower interest rates, or to fix a multiyear target of external financing with an overall plan of internal reforms for each Latin American government. The purpose of such a plan would be to restore an economic growth rate of 5 percent regionally, avoid political crisis, renew public confidence in democratic governments, and move toward social justice.

Another task is the fight against drugs. Here we must redistribute responsibility so we can begin to focus on not only supply but demand.

And we must find a program to deal with the waves of migrants moving from south to north. This dilemma can be addressed only by acknowledging the interests of all countries involved and, above all, the interests of the migrants themselves.

We have lost a great deal of time recently that we must now recoup. What we're really entering is the world of the twenty-first century. In this world, Latin America expects to lead *itself* in Latin American affairs. We believe that the United States has more options in our region than simply either capitulating or going abroad in search of monsters to destroy.

We do not ask of you abstention or interven-

tion—but rather cooperation, your civilized presence, your great moral and intellectual values, your essential adherence to systems of justice and human rights, your great economic resources, and above all, the capacity and value of your human capital.

Apply all of this to the reconstruction of our battered hemispheric system. We must all create a new policy based on rationality, consultation, mutual respect, mutual concessions, and the essential *quid pro quo* of inter-American relations. You give us non-intervention, we give you security assurances: we cooperate with each other.

How is it you can find so many solutions to your own internal conflicts through negotiation, patience, respect for the law, and an understanding of the other's point of view, and yet withhold these virtues when you deal with Latin America? Why can you so rapidly find solutions to conflicts with your enemies when they are strong and with your rivals when they are daring, but find it so difficult to reach agreement with your friends in this hemisphere? Your friends, not your satellites. *Our* hemisphere, no one's backyard, everyone's front entrance, the home of every man, woman, and child in the New World.

[Travelogue]

## WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE NICE AND THE TRAINS RUN ON TIME

From "Letter From Chile," by Geoffrey Wagner, in the July 1988 issue of *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*. Wagner, a retired college English professor, lives in Grenada and New York City.

**M**y advice to anyone who wants to see some of the most polite people around is to get to Chile soon—before we declare war on it or the media turn it into a London suburb with a bust of Lenin in town hall, tax-funded homes for lesbians, and a veto on golliwog dolls.

My wife, Colleen, and I were all but put off from going recently by inflammatory headlines, chiefly in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, to the effect that the country was in total turmoil: constant demonstrations in the capital, power stations blown up nightly, and the like. In eight days in and around Santiago and Viña, and weeks in the lake district to the south, we saw none of this. We also had the pleasure of not hearing a word of politics there, despite

meeting several ministers and their wives and once attending a fairly high-level governmental party at the Bellas Artes museum, hosted by the lovely doyenne of the establishment, Nena Ossa. Frankly, the first impression any traveler must get in Chile is of the really high-grade nature of everyone around.

At a time when the wallpaper journalism of the West was mounting a fairly hysterical hate campaign to claw down Pinochet, Santiago was thinly and extremely politely policed by the *carabineros*, though I suspect they don't take kindly to having Molotov cocktails chucked at them. As for freedom of the press, I can only say that *Hustler* was on sale in my hotel.

However, except for some handsome outlying architecture and the bosky side streets off Los Leones—where a registered girl-watcher can go crazy—Santiago struck me as a provincial capital, without the shopping or gastronomy of Buenos Aires. Its wines are, of course, another matter, Chile being virtually the vineyard of South America. A bottle of the ubiquitous Undurraga white, a Rheinwein approximation, costs less than a dollar in restaurants. Chilenos take baths in the stuff.

But Chile's real glory lies in the south. In ninety comfortable minutes Ladeco will fly you down to Temuco, where you can rent a *yanqui* car to be turned in later at Puerto Montt, farther down. The roads there are superlative, and such is local courtesy that hitchhikers expect to be picked up. This glorious Andean lake area is unexploited, with the exception of some of the finest powder-base ski slopes in the world. Around November there seem to be almost no tourists at all—liberalism has done its work—and the ice-blue lakes are fringed with snow-capped volcanoes, their lower slopes heavy with fir and southern beech.

At Pucón the manager of our lodge was genuinely puzzled by our request for a key to our room; there was none. We had entered the almost forgotten world of total trust.

The scenery around Pucón seemed delightfully Swiss or Bavarian. Lake Caburga was lovely, the returning motorist rewarded by a glorious open-air steep in a steaming thermal bath at Huife. No one about except the concierge of the simple establishment and her two chubby, rosy-cheeked children.

We spent one crisp morning alone by the lovely falls of Petrohué with acres of broom in golden bloom and butterflies that would have driven Nabokov crazy. All of a sudden a swarm of giggling uniformed schoolgirls debouched from a bus and cascaded all over my wife, asking questions about America. How boring it must be to travel by the liberal Baedeker and miss scenes like these.



[Practice Exam]

## ARE YOU CUT OUT FOR THE CIA?

From the CIA Entrance Examination, a study guide by John Quirk, published by ARCO. The questions below are excerpted from "Personality Evaluation, General Knowledge and Information," the first section of the sample examination contained in the manual. The study guide, which has a foreword by former CIA director William E. Colby, is designed to help applicants prepare for the CIA Case Officer Test.

Directions: This section is designed to determine if you possess some of the basic attitudes and opinions that are necessary in order to excel as a CIA Case Officer. For most of the questions there are no correct answers.

1. It is the mission of the CIA Case Officer to recruit officials of foreign governments to betray the trust that their government has placed in them.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.
2. Many informers and agents are routinely given large amounts of cash as payment for their services. Do you consider this to be bribery?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No.
3. How do you feel about living in a region where your presence, activities, conversations, etc., are continuously monitored by the hostile intelligence service of a foreign government?
  - a. It would bother me a great deal.
  - b. I do not feel strongly about it one way or the other.
  - c. It would not bother me at all.
4. As a career officer, you would be unable to "keep up" with your friends and contemporaries who entered more lucrative fields, such as investment banking. Would this bother you?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No.
5. As an operations officer for the CIA, you would frequently be unable to tell your friends, and even your family, what you do for a living. Would this bother you?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No.
6. Do you take orders well?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No.
7. Do you interact with foreigners well?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No.

8. Do you find people with different cultural habits, customs, values, etc., strange?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

9. Would you like to live in a war zone?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

10. Since espionage is illegal in nearly all countries, you would regularly be breaking the local law. Would this affect your ability to serve as a Case Officer?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

11. Would you like to live in an area that has no running water, no toilet facilities, or where you were forced to spend extended periods in a tent?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

12. As an employee of the U.S. government living in a potentially dangerous environment, how do you feel about being a potential target of terrorists or opposing intelligence services?

- a. I definitely do not want to be put into such a position.
- b. I do not feel strongly about it one way or the other.
- c. I consider this to be a definite positive.

[Trial Exhibit]

## URANIUM, IN MODERATION

From a 1983 letter sent by the health and safety division at the National Lead of Ohio (NLO) uranium processing plant, to nearby residents of Fernald, Ohio. The letter was sent in response to published reports of the presence of uranium in the soil around NLO. It has been submitted as evidence in a suit brought by 14,000 southern Ohio residents who live near NLO. The plaintiffs claim that NLO knowingly allowed radioactive material to leak from the plant. Recently, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency disclosed that NLO had released 298,000 pounds of uranium into the air. In court papers filed last fall, the U.S. Department of Energy admitted that it knew about these emissions all along and that exposure to even small amounts of radiation poses health risks.

September 12, 1983

No matter where we live in this world we are exposed to a certain amount of radiation. This is due to natural terrestrial radiation from rocks and soils, and to cosmic radiation. "Terrestrial radiation" refers to radiation from the naturally

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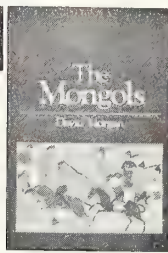
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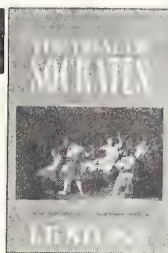
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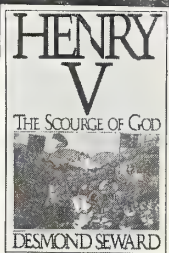
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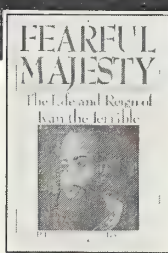
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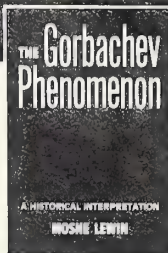
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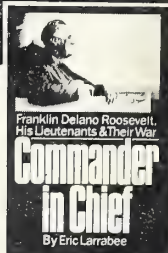
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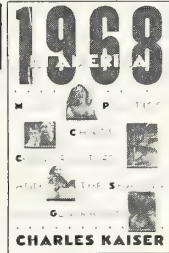
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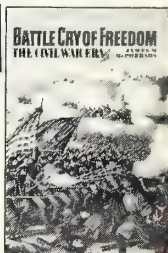
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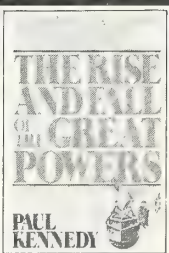
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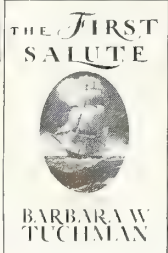
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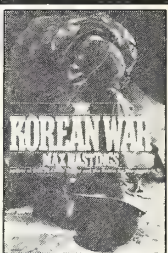
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*"Bravo 20 Bombing Range Near Fallon, Nevada, 1986." From Richard Misrach: Photographs 1975-1987, published by Gallery Min, in Tokyo. The area where the photograph was taken is public land that the military has been bombing for thirty-five years without authorization. Arguing that the area is now too contaminated for any other use, the Navy recently sought and received permission from Congress to continue bombing.*

occurring radioactive materials in the earth, the most common of which are potassium and the uranium and thorium families. "Cosmic radiation" designates a complex mixture of naturally occurring high-energy radiations of extra-terrestrial origin. The primary cosmic rays are those radiations that arrive from outer space. The amount of cosmic radiation present is related to the elevation above sea level. For example, the amount of cosmic radiation received by a Denver resident is ten times that received by a resident of Cincinnati. The reason for this is that the atmosphere acts as a shield against radiation; there is less of an atmospheric shield at the higher Denver elevation.

Uranium is a radioactive element found in nature. A detection device will show that we are surrounded by radioactivity wherever we live. An example which might help you make a comparison is the amount of radiation that is received by the people who occupy the new U.S. Senate building in Washington, D.C. A worker in the building gets more radiation exposure from the granite walls than any of our neighbors

receive from our operations.

Thousands of tons of uranium have passed through our production plants and have been hauled over our plant roads. Dust collectors remove 99.9 percent of the uranium before the air in the plant reaches the exhaust stacks.

Airborne uranium that reaches the plant boundary is monitored at seven locations. The amount of airborne uranium found at these locations has been only a small percentage of the limit set by federal regulations for uranium in the air. Airborne uranium that goes beyond the boundary will, in time, settle out on the ground and add to the natural soil content. There is no health significance to this slight increase.

Since our plant began operating in 1951, we have complied with all health and environmental standards and will continue to do so. We will also keep improving our controls beyond what is required to simply comply. As an example, efforts are being made to improve dust-collector efficiency. Newer filter bags are being tested, and an improved detection system for small dust-collector losses is being installed.



[Pamphlet]

## ADVICE FOR REFUSENIKS

From "Soldiers' Guidelines No. 2," a pamphlet currently being distributed to Israeli reservists by the peace group Yesh Gvul ("There Is a Limit"). The Israeli government is investigating the group to determine whether the pamphlet is an incitement or aid to insubordination and mutiny.

**T**his booklet contains practical information of importance to anyone considering whether to refuse to serve in the occupied territories. It reflects the collected knowledge of the 160 members of Yesh Gvul who have been imprisoned for refusing to serve during the Lebanon war and the forty-two (to date) who have refused to serve since the uprising began in the territories.

The aim of this booklet is to provide practical information so that the decision about whether or not to serve is made with a full understanding of the personal consequences. That decision has broad ramifications for every citizen anxious about Israel's security, character, and moral standards.

### WHEN? HOW?

If you have decided to refuse, it is worthwhile to notify your unit ahead of time. Individuals who have given advance warning have often received lighter sentences or, on occasion, have been offered alternative assignments.

### PENALTIES

All the refuseniks prosecuted so far have been tried by their immediate commanding officers. However, it is the accused's prerogative to demand a trial before a high-ranking officer, though you thereby run the risk of a heavier sentence. Military law limits the sentence handed down according to the rank of the adjudicating officer. Majors can sentence an individual to up to fourteen days in prison, colonels up to twenty-eight days, and lieutenant colonels up to thirty-five days. (Bear in mind that our experience shows that an officer who is sympathetic to your political views may be more severe.)

### MILITARY PRISONS

Contrary to prevalent belief, refuseniks do not suffer harassment from jailers or other convicts. Without exception, all of our colleagues who spent time in prison report that they were treated with respect. It is important for the refusenik to stress that the refusal to serve is motivated not by alienation from one's country but

by an involvement and a readiness for self-sacrifice. It is because of this emphasis that the refusenik is highly regarded even by those who vehemently oppose his political views.

In prison you will be housed with other reservists convicted for failing to report for service and, possibly, with regular soldiers jailed for trifling offenses. Housing is in tents or huts.

Generally your work will consist of refitting and sorting military equipment, but anyone wishing to remain in his tent may be able to arrange this. During non-working hours, you are free to do whatever you wish within the tent compound. You can use the time to read or complete university assignments. There is no restriction on bringing in books, newspapers, and writing materials.

Rations are military. Cigarettes: ten per day.

[Poster]

## MAGGIE GETS EVEN

### On Your Knees To Madame M



**SUDDENLY, YOU BELONG TO THE PRIVILEGED FEW**

From the September 1988 Index on Censorship, an issue on censorship in Britain. Peter Rix, the designer of this poster, was arrested with three friends when they tried to post it on a London street prior to the 1987 general election. They were among the first people charged under the 1986 Public Order Act. The law prohibits speech that is "abusive or insulting within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm, or distress." The case was eventually thrown out of court.

Furloughs are granted occasionally on Jewish holidays. It is possible to arrange for special leave for a specific purpose, such as an examination, a doctor's appointment, or an interview. Bring documentation!

When there are a number of refuseniks, they are usually housed together.

As a "prisoner of conscience" you will probably arouse curiosity. Since a large group is more likely to be drawn into an altercation, it is best to have discussions in private or with no more than two or three people.

Upon your arrival in prison, the jailers will greet you with a "ceremony" (yelling, etc.) which is aimed at demonstrating who's boss. This ends within a few hours. For the first day or two, you will be slightly dazed, but the other convicts will give you a fraternal welcome and provide you with basic information, such as when there is hot water and where the best place to work is.

Prison is no nightmare; it is the routine, the boredom, and the isolation from the outside world that are hardest to take. When you arrive at the prison, you are entitled to one one-minute phone call to report your whereabouts and make visiting arrangements.

After your third week in prison, you are entitled to one weekly visit. If you apply pressure, you can sometimes arrange a visit during the first two weeks. The non-transferable visiting permit is given only to family, but accompanying persons are generally admitted. Visitors can bring underwear, socks, towels, books, and writing materials. They may not bring food or cigarettes. The visit may last no more than twenty minutes. The wait at the prison gate: up to two hours.

[Prophecy]

## GORBY THE ANTICHRIST

*From Gorbachev! Has the Real Antichrist Come? by Robert W. Faid, published by Victory House in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Faid, who lives in Greenville, South Carolina, is a retired nuclear engineer.*

**T**he coming of the Antichrist was foretold by Saint John the Apostle in the Book of Revelation and by other writers in the New Testament. Here are all the clues that we need to identify him:

He will appear abruptly, like a sea monster rising from the sea.

He will have seven heads.

He will have ten horns and ten crowns.

He will rule ten countries in addition to his own.

Upon each head the name of blasphemy will be written.

He will be like a leopard.

His feet will be those of a bear.

His mouth will be that of a lion.

The dragon will give him his power, his seat, and great authority.

He will be the eighth king of a country.

Ten other kings will give their strength and power to him.

They will have no power of their own, but will serve at his discretion.

These ten kings will be of one mind (ideology) with the Antichrist.

The number of his name will be connected with 666.

One of his heads will have a deadly wound.

This wound will be dramatically healed and the world will be astonished.

### THE SCORE: GORBACHEV AND THE ANTICHRIST PROPHECY

*The number of his name.* Gorbachev's name is a function of the number 666 when we use the values for the letters of his name in both the Cyrillic and Hebrew alphabets (after the name has been transliterated into these languages).

*His sudden appearance.* He rose abruptly upon the world scene just as John describes the beast rising from the sea. We have seen that this is "Satan's sea"—the Soviet Union—which has a population of 276 million, Satan's theomatic number.

*His seven heads* are the seven Warsaw Pact nations.

*The name of blasphemy.* The name written on each of his heads is communism—a name that is clearly blasphemous toward God.

*His ten horns* are the nations which the Soviet Union has devoured.

Gorbachev wears the *ten crowns* of these ten nations.

His feet are those of *a bear*, the symbol of Russia.

He is the most highly educated man ever to head the Soviet Union, and he has the cunning of *a leopard*.

*The mouth of a lion.* When Gorbachev speaks, the world listens—as when a lion roars.

*His power.* The dragon, Satan, has given him his power, his seat, and great authority.

*The eighth king.* We have seen that Gorbachev is the eighth leader, or "king," of the Soviet Union. He is of the same ideology as his predecessors.

*The ten kings.* The ten members of the Polit-



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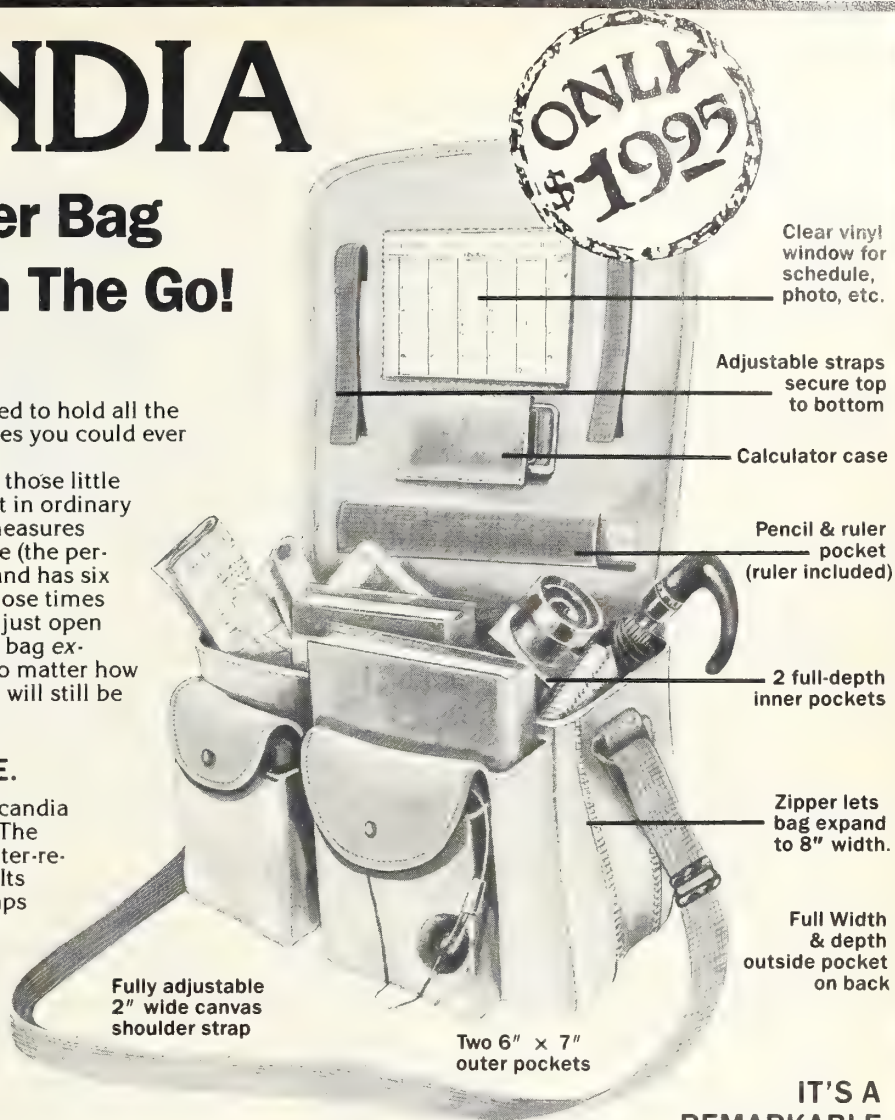
### IT HOLDS EVERYTHING!

The Scandia is intelligently designed to hold all the books, paper, equipment and clothes you could ever need to carry.

There's even special pockets for all those little odds and ends that seem to get lost in ordinary bags. The sturdy canvas Scandia measures 14½" across, 11" deep, and 4" wide (the perfect size for an airplane carry-on), and has six inner and outer pockets. And for those times when you need a little extra space, just open the Scandia's inside zipper and the bag expands to a full 8 inches in width! No matter how much you pack into the Scandia, it will still be trim enough to carry comfortably.

### IT'S EXTREMELY DURABLE.

As anyone who has ever owned a Scandia will testify, *this bag lasts for years*. The Scandia's high-quality canvas is water-resistant, color-fast, and scuff-proof. Its heavy duty zippers, piping, and snaps are well-made and extremely durable. And the Scandia will stay in style for years; its attractive, casual look goes as well with a business suit as it does with jeans and a sweater. And with six handsome colors to choose from, you might want to own more than one!



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buro elected him General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. These are kings without kingdoms as yet, who give their power and strength to Gorbachev. They serve at his discretion.

*Satan's seat.* We have seen that the Soviet Union is truly Satan's seat of power in the world today. Not only do theomatic clues of Satan's number appear as the values of Russian words, but no nation in history has treated its own citizens in the manner that the Soviet Union has—disposing of unwanted people by the millions through execution and imprisonment in slave-labor camps.

*Satan's goal.* We have seen that Satan's goal and the Soviet Union's goal are one and the same—world domination. The Soviet armed forces are the most powerful in history, and they are ideally suited for the Antichrist to launch his campaign of conquest of the earth.

[Invective]

## IN THE SPIRIT OF SPIRO

*From a press release issued last fall by John M. Snyder, director of public affairs for the Washington-based Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms. Snyder was responding to a sample homily distributed by the Archdiocese of Baltimore voicing opposition to a gun-control referendum. The referendum would have repealed a law banning the sale of cheap handguns; it was defeated in November.*

**A**s an appropriate reaction to this vicious attack on the tens of thousands of law-abiding Maryland firearms owners and others who oppose this police-state law, I am urging Catholic gun owners and other Catholics in Maryland who oppose this law to stop putting money in the Sunday church collection baskets. As a symbol of protest to this hierarchic outrage, I am asking them further to put into those collection baskets as many spent cartridge casings as they possibly can. Let's send them a message!

If the bush-league bishops would spend more time on the prevention of priestly pedophilia than they do on the promotion of pistol penalization, we'd all be a lot better off. We don't have to tolerate the pompous pedantry of pacifistic pruneheads, and there's no reason why we should.

### PROPHECY UNFULFILLED AS YET

*The deadly wound.* The deadly wound to one of the beast's heads has not yet happened. Since the heads are the Warsaw Pact nations, one of these might possibly revolt, causing a "wound" that would appear deadly to Gorbachev's political future.

*The deadly wound healed.* This is also for the future. The revolt will be crushed, possibly by the use of nuclear weapons, and the world will be amazed. The false prophet will then appear on the scene.

Mikhail S. Gorbachev has fulfilled all of the Revelation prophecy concerning the Antichrist that is possible up to this point. Never before in history has any man fit the Antichrist prophecy so exactly.

### THE ODDS THAT HE IS

I have calculated the odds that Gorbachev is actually the Antichrist. The odds are 860,609,175,188,282,100 to 1. The calculations are based on the odds that I have assigned to each instance in which Gorbachev has fulfilled elements of the prophecy:

Instance	Odds
Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Russian equals 666 x 2	94 to 1
Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Russian equals 46 x 29	14 to 1
Mikhail Gorbachev in Russian equals 46 x 27	5 to 1
Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Greek equals 888 x 2	295 to 1
Gorbachev in Greek equals exactly 888	887 to 1
Rise from obscurity over men of equal qualifications	1,999 to 1
Soviet population exactly 276 million (Satan's number)	49 to 1
Rules ten other kingdoms	9 to 1
Exactly ten kings (Politburo members when elected)	9 to 1
Exactly seven Warsaw Pact nations	9 to 1
Being the eighth "king" or leader of the USSR	7 to 1

I then multiplied (94)(14)(5)(295)(887)(1,999)(49)(9)(9)(9)(7) to get the overall odds: 860,609,175,188,282,100 to 1.

In order to eliminate any disagreement about my calculations, I have *reduced* the odds by 99.999 percent. Calculating the odds as only 0.001 percent of the original figure, we get 8,606,091,751,882 to 1. Even with these drastically reduced odds, the statistics indicate overwhelmingly that Mikhail S. Gorbachev is the actual man that John saw rising from the sea—the Antichrist.





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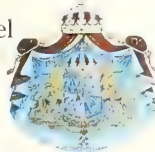


*Victor Th. Engwall*

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*By Appointment to His Majesty the King of Sweden.*

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# GEVALIA

KAFFE

A SWEDISH OBSESSION

[Essay]

## EXPERIENCED, QUALIFIED —AND STUPID

From "The Magic Ingredient in Politicians," an essay by Esther Vilar, in *The Power of Stupidity*, published by Econ in Düsseldorf, West Germany. Vilar, who was born in Argentina and lived in West Germany, now lives in New York City. She is the author of *The Manipulated Man* and *The American Popess*, a play. This essay was translated from the German by Joel Agee.

What part does stupidity play in the quest for political power? If those who are born into power are insensitive and unimaginative, what about those whom we freely elect to determine our fate? Are they capable of governing intelligently? And if not, why do we follow them?

Naturally, in order to arrive at a position where one can call the shots and tell others how to live their lives, a person has to show a certain talent for some particular activity; but beyond that, one must possess the qualities of a climber and, eventually, those of a leader. Generally speaking, these qualities consist of industry, obedience, thoroughness, enthusiasm, goal-directedness, a willingness to take risks, and finally, the not at all self-evident desire to tell people what they should and should not do: the joy of commanding, the will to power.

We tend to think of these qualities as positive. We have heard their praises sung from earliest childhood, for most parents want their children to achieve something in life—status or wealth or both. But isn't it by virtue of some well-concealed deficiency that a person usually rises to the top? Are the qualities that support an illustrious professional career as admirable as we have been led to believe?

*Knowledge is power*: we learned that in school. But, as Karl Kraus said, a hollow head has room for a lot of knowledge.

*Diligence* is a highly praised quality, but it also implies dedication to a single purpose at the expense of all others. Isn't such renunciation easiest for those who aren't tempted by anything else? Who don't have to renounce anything?

*Obedience*, a quality we disguise as the "capacity for teamwork," implies a willingness to subordinate one's own ideas. Doesn't it stand to reason that obedience comes easiest to those who don't have ideas of their own?

The *thoroughness* needed to become Number One in a particular field involves perpetual repetition, practice, and training to the point of

exhaustion. Who could be better equipped for such an existence than someone who can't even imagine how stimulating it might be to try something new?

*Enthusiasm* is a wonderful quality. But surely a person who summons up the same excitement, year after year, for the same product, the same idea, the same activity, the same sequence of movements, is unimaginative to an extraordinary degree.

What about *goal-directedness*—the single-minded focus on reaching one's destination? Does it not betray a certain lack of imagination concerning the aspirations and talents of others?

And *courage*, the willingness to take risks, who could possess this virtue more securely than an enterprising fool with little or no awareness of the dangers he might encounter? Or a person who cannot even conceive of the disaster he might unleash by an error of judgment?

A world-class athlete is a careerist who possesses all these qualities in their purest form. What extraordinary discipline, thinks the sensitive homebody in front of his television set; imagine the training it takes before you can handle a ball the way he does! He must have sacrificed his childhood, his youth, to achieve this. Just look at that crazy guy, racing along the ice like that, what courage—one wrong move and he'll break his neck! My, look at so-and-so, cutting corners at such speed—one tiny mistake and he will trade his Porsche for a wheelchair!

For he, the observer, presumes that this athlete is as imaginative as he is. And since he cannot conceive of anything more tedious than pushing himself to the point of exhaustion in order someday to swim, ride, pedal, or drive a fraction of a second faster than a certain other person, he admires his hero for the torturous discipline he imposes on himself.

Since he himself is afraid of death and is fully capable of imagining life in a wheelchair with all its humiliating details, he presumes that his champion feels the same fear, and he envies him his courage.

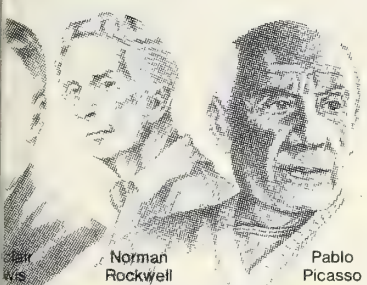
And when, after beating the odds and all his opponents, the champion steps before the television camera, still out of breath but perfectly calm, and speaks in clear, modest sentences about his strategy for the event, the observer admires him even more. Imagine being that level-headed, that cool, just once in your life!

He never will. He may bask in some of his hero's reflected glory—acquire his triple-striped jersey, his tennis racket, his skis, or his car—anything but his daily routine, because for that, he's just not simpleminded enough.





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From "Thorns," a show of large-format Polaroid photographs by Eugenia de Olazabal, at the Kerr Gallery in New York City, last November. De Olazabal lives in Mexico City and New York.

However, our world-record holder's heroism is not dangerous. His store of capital is in his body, and its funds are not renewable; the glory is gone the moment a younger man takes away his crown. He may want to earn a lot of money, but he's not after power. And perhaps that is what makes him so appealing: his great effort garners him so little profit compared with what he might have achieved in another realm.

But a person who invests as much energy in shaking hands, calculating profits, or exercising troops is dangerous. For if he is lucky and we are not, the same qualities that lifted the great athlete to his pinnacle for a brief season will entrench the career politician for half a century in a position of power that, as a rule, remains off-limits to the person who *should* occupy it for the benefit of all—the man or woman of imagination, sensitivity, and intelligence.

Anyone whose political conscience impels him to attend party congresses, read interviews with the candidates, or follow their activities on TV cannot fail to ask himself how these men and women can stand the lives they lead. How does a person manage to swim in a sea of hollow phrases for years? How does he generate his undiminishing fervor in defense of a party program that is constantly changing? How can he bear mouthing all those promises that he knows he can never keep? Why is your average politician willing to embrace even the most farfetched be-

lief system if he thinks it will make him seem like more of a regular guy?

Every election year you can observe gentlemen of the bluest blood fraternizing with soot-smearing miners as if those moments were the fulfillment of all their dreams, and skinny bureaucrats paying homage to baseball stars as if the next home run would determine the course of history. Those who address senior citizens speak of the fruits of experience, while those who turn to the young say we should follow the example of youth. A candidate addressing entrepreneurs deplores the insatiable demands of the work force; addressing the workers a day or two later, he'll condemn the greed of the bosses. And on he goes to the next charade, shaking hands, patting backs, forming friendships. Asking questions that no one answers.

Offering answers that no one hears.

**N**ow why, asks the thoughtful citizen, why do all these ladies and gentlemen impose a lifestyle upon themselves that the citizen would not voluntarily adopt under any circumstances? Are the people's representatives so selfless that driven by the sacred goal of saving the world from destruction they will sacrifice their common sense and good taste? Are they hiding their true qualities for the good of the people, or is what they're showing all that they have to give? Is their activity so exhausting that they no longer



notice their own banality? Or is their banality a prerequisite for seeking that activity in the first place? Are the people as stupid as those who would like to govern them seem to assume? Or are the latter so stupid that they don't notice that the people are smarter than they are? Are those who finally succeed elected because there is no one better to fill the job? Or are people of superior ability eliminated from the start by the limited imagination of the voting masses?

Does the democratic process consist of having the candidate adopt the voters' opinion? And if not, how does the politician arrive at his own? When would he have time to think, since he spends his days and nights at meetings and rallies? How can he set policy for the future of his country if he doesn't even have the time to experience it in the present? Why should he allow his feelings to develop if he will have to suppress them later? And if he possessed any imagination at the start of his career, would he not have to silence it, since it would almost certainly impede his progress?

Does the fate of the citizens of Western countries lie in the hands of those who possess neither imagination nor sensitivity, since, if they did, they could never have allowed their inner lives to be plundered for the sake of power and influence?

Is it possible that those who so vigorously plead for the right to assume responsibility on our behalf can no longer even imagine what that word means?

Are not those who are supposed to guarantee us a lasting peace ultimately too unimaginative to even consider the consequences of a war?

In other words, is our political fate at the mercy of a power that, in the final analysis, is nothing more than the power of *stupidity*?

[Essay]

## POP CULTURE, AUTO-CANONIZED

Excerpted from "Auto-canonization: Tropes of Self-Legitimation in 'Popular Culture,'" by Jonathan Freedman, in the premiere issue of the *Yale Journal of Criticism*. Freedman is a professor of English at Yale University.

**A** glance at the program of the most recent meeting of the Modern Language Association or at any of the more prestigious journals in the academic profession suggests that the central effort of this intellectual moment is to "open up the canon." Academic critics of our time are in-

tensely interested in questioning the assessment of literary value, in reconsidering the status of those works that have been traditionally cited as central to the Western literary tradition. Whether that tradition is understood as Matthew Arnold's "best which has been thought and said," F. R. Leavis's "great tradition," T. S. Eliot's "ideal order" of Western letters, or some loosely defined sense of the "classic" monuments of the Western tradition—those articulated by William Bennett and Allan Bloom, to cite the most public examples—the notion that there exists a specific, delimited, group of works that automatically deserves to be studied, quoted, taught, and *known* by all educated people has come under spirited attack. That notion is now understood to be historically variable and ideologically determined, for it unjustly silences marginalized voices and delegitimizes alternate perspectives. And the American academy has vigorously responded with the privileging of a new canon, one that would give voice to the works of the silenced, the disenfranchised, and the liminal.

But if the arguments for canon-opening are clear and persuasive, the theoretical and historical import of this gesture is perhaps more vexed. For the very intensity with which canon-opening has been pursued within the academy can also serve to remind us of what political conservatives such as Bennett must repress: that the opening of previously closed literary canons to new voices and perspectives is one of the most oft-repeated (dare I say even canonical?) gestures of the Western literary tradition. In a very real sense, opening up the canon was precisely what Dante was doing when he sought to write a great epic poem in the vernacular, what Wordsworth was doing when he sought to recover for poetry the "language really used by men," what even Eliot thought he was doing when, for all his pompous harrumphing, he sought to bring the verbal flotsam and jetsam of lower-middle-class experience into English poetry. The canon, one might put it polemically, is always already open: or rather, shut only in a series of momentary closures that make possible the gestures of revisionary opening.

Much has been made of the ways in which canon-opening has invigorated high culture with the ideas and values previously embedded in popular or mass culture. What I want to do in this essay is examine the flow of traffic in the opposite direction. For one of the striking features of our cultural moment is the way in which popular culture has taken to expressing many of the values of high culture—particularly those values having to do with the very idea of a canon—at precisely the moment when we in the academy have been questioning the

legitimacy of just those values.

Indeed, the very notions that we in the academy have come to distrust most intensely—the privileging of irony, complexity, and ambiguity, the timelessness of works of art, the notion of the tortured genius of the artist: that complex of essentially Romantic values and assumptions that underlies what we have come to know as the canon—are preserved and privileged by the very popular culture we seek to open the canon up to. At least in 1988, I would argue, it is in mass and not high culture that the value of literary canon-formation is preserved.

I want to offer a number of examples to clarify and extend this thesis. I'll begin with a figure whose presence, I am sure, has not yet been reflected in the halls of American academe: Barry Manilow. I refer particularly to Manilow's greatest hit, "I Write the Songs." "I write the songs that make the whole world sing," Mani-

low croons, "... I am Music and/ I write the songs." What interests me is not so much the narcissistic claim for the ubiquity of the Manilowian oeuvre—such gestures are fairly routine in the world of commercial jingles in which Manilow was trained. Rather, I want to focus on the overtly aggressive foregrounding of the first-person singular, as if responding to some skeptical interlocutor ("No, Barry, *I* write the songs"). This defensiveness may indeed be justified; underneath the aggression may linger Manilow's guilty awareness that the music—or the formulaic demands of the medium that he has so successfully mastered—writes *him*. But the song foregrounds by means of the "I" two crucial assertions: first, that the songs are written not in the Derridean sense of the written as the arbitrary or the impersonal but rather in the older sense of the written as composed, as organized by a primary, fully individuated consciousness exercising itself in acts of spontaneous but disciplined creativity; and second, that this consciousness, this "I" that writes the songs, has some sort of social role or function to fulfill in the world at large. The "I" not only writes the songs, but writes those songs that make the whole world sing, songs that bring the world closer to harmoniousness and peace. He is, indeed, a figure of the artist as Pythagorean image, as one who is fitted by his genius to be a sounding board for the primal harmonies of the universe.

Now these are precisely the assumptions that we in the academy have grown accustomed to calling into question. The notion of the author, of the creative imagination, of the intuitive, divinatory originality of that imagination, and of that imagination's potentially redemptive role in the world is one that we have come, in recent years, to see as the product of a specific literary and cultural moment. What we encounter here is the Wordsworthian, no less than Manilowian, egotistical sublime. And we have learned to question these assumptions in our own work and to teach our students to beware of them. Yet we do so in studied ignorance of the fact that these assumptions are now pandemic in the mass culture.

Indeed, many of the things we want to teach our students to unlearn are things they have learned from people we have taught. For the academy had much to do with getting these notions into the world of rock. To spend some time immersing oneself in contemporary popular culture is, in fact, to rediscover any number of the academic fads and curiosities of the past twenty years. Very few of us practice myth criticism anymore, for example, but, as my colleague Jim Shapiro observes, the mythic is a

#### [Glossary]

### WHAT IT BE

From "Word Definitions," a slang glossary in the June 1988 issue of *Thrasher*, the skateboarding monthly.

WHAT IT IS	WHAT IT BE
def	cool
dope	the best
fresh	rad
funky fresh	way rad
stupid fresh	the raddest
chill	kick back
ill	lame
perpetrate	pose
dis	talk shit
crib	pad
tip	johnson
jock	johnson
jammy	johnson
deep	intense
wak	tweaked
freaks	betties
load	car
posse	homeboys
down	into your scene, babe
hard	tough
word	word



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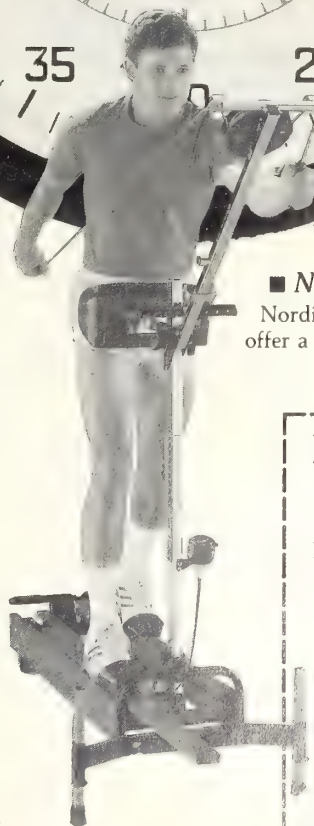
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recurrent theme in heavy-metal rock, often in unbelievably pretentious terms. So too are moments from freshman English and philosophy, perhaps in more compelling ways. Think of the British art-rock group the Moody Blues' *In the Beginning*, which opens, like any freshman philosophy course, with Descartes:

I think...  
I think I am  
Therefore I am.  
I think...

Or, to cite a cinematic example, think of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. The movie's narrative conceit, the attempt to come to terms with the American experience in Vietnam by placing the story of *Heart of Darkness* there, has much to do with the academic place of Conrad in the 1970s—as I remember well from my freshman year in college, in which *Heart of Darkness* was the one work shared by all the sections of the freshman-comp. course, and in which it was taught directly as an allegory of American involvement in Vietnam.

**W**hat might be the relation between a high culture that is inherently committed to an ethos of revisionism and a mass or popular culture

that is equally committed to a search for cultural legitimacy that it imagines in the very terms official or high culture abandons? I would suggest in partial answer that both the intellectual's discourse about popular culture and that culture itself quickly become spectral reflections of each other: mirrors in which they attempt to shape themselves into the image that they imagine is the other's image of them, if only in an attempt to deny the resemblance.

Let me articulate this problem more precisely by (in good academic fashion) giving it a name: "auto-canonization"—those moments in which popular or mass culture adopts the canonizing strategies of high or official culture in order to legitimate itself. The full complexity and import of this act may perhaps be glimpsed in my final example. Diana Ross's recording of "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" (written by Ashford and Simpson, and originally recorded by Marvin Gaye and Tammy Terrell) presents another, perhaps somewhat less pretentious (or, at least, pretentious in a different way) version of the phenomenon about which I am speaking. As a chorus reminiscent of the Supremes hums the song in the background, Diana Ross chants a little poem. Here is its second verse:

I may not be able to express  
The depths of the love I feel for you  
But a writer put it very nicely  
When he was away from the one he loved  
He sat down and wrote these words:

And what follows is a lovely melody, foreshadowing (and playing against) the song itself:

No wind, no rain, nor winter's cold  
Can stop me, baby  
If you are my goal.

Now what interests me is the seeming gratuitousness of the writer who is introduced in the middle of this song. Why is it necessary that he—and the gender is clearly masculine—enter into the song? What does he bring with him? What he brings, of course, is the baggage that Ashford and Simpson want to be carrying themselves: the cultural authority of authorship, indeed of poetry itself. These are words that one cannot say, or does not want to say, by oneself alone; rather (employing a contemporary version of the rhetoric of inexpressibility familiar to readers of Renaissance poetry), they are words that one wants a "writer" to say for one. What is being employed here is not only allusion to this kind of authority but the authority of allusion itself—an authority foregrounded by the "nicely" with which the allusion is made, a term of connoisseurship and control, not (as one might expect) self-abasement or self-contempt. The song proclaims that it itself partakes of the writerly mode it alludes to. This is not

[Interview]

## ULTIMATE NUDITY

From an interview with film director John Waters, conducted by E. J. Kahn III, in the 1988 issue of Provincetown Arts, an annual published in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Waters's most recent movie is *Hairspray*.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything that shocks you?

WATERS: Yes—ultimate nudity. I heard about it in L.A. It's when you have the skin of your testicles removed and replaced with clear skin. The thinking being that it's more erotic to see how your body works inside. Think what will eventually happen: we'll all walk around with clear bodies, like high-school science projects. "Oh, I can tell that person doesn't love me. His heart isn't beating fast." Or, "I don't want to date that person. She drinks too much. Look at her liver." It's the ultimate voyeurism. I was shocked. But maybe that's the Nineties.

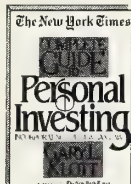




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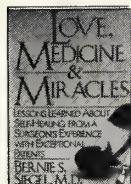
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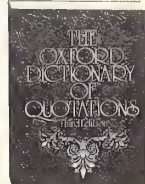
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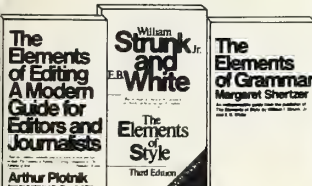
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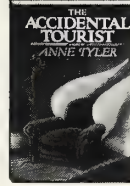


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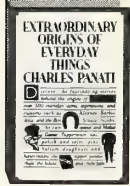


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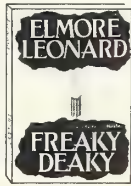
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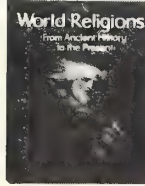
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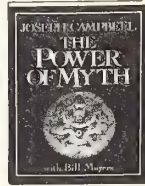
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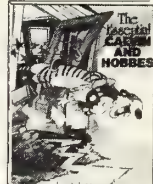
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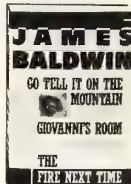
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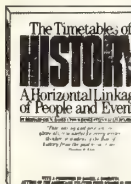
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just a melody circulating randomly through the air but a work of poetry crafted for the listener alone.

We must respond to these complicated moves toward self-canonization in an equally complicated way, resisting the intellectual's desire either to sentimentalize or to condescend to the artifacts of popular culture.

Yes, it is pretentious, it is kitschy, it is absurd, and it is often disturbing: think of Barry Manilow if you like Diana Ross, and of what Diana Ross is doing to Marvin Gaye and Tammy Terrell if you don't. And yet, there remains in that impulse something that should give pause to the revisionist impulses with which we in the teaching profession are currently preoccupied. For it may remind us that the animating structures of thought that lie behind the canon—the myths of the transcending importance of art, of the intentionality and genius of the artist, of the redemptive powers of imagination, and of the social currency and import of the written word that these writers cre-

ate—have had and continue to have a cultural resonance that transcends our desire to write them off as mere products of ideological false consciousness. These are *enabling* myths, for they allow people who have not been credentialized by the academy—taken here in its largest sense to include not only the university but the entire educational apparatus and the adjunct literati who float nervously alongside it—to grant themselves and their experiences a form of cultural legitimacy. The notion of the author, for example, and of his or her creative imagination can only be meaningless to those who are surrounded by, are drowning in, its products. For others it still has a powerfully generative force.

There is still one point I need to make before I cease. And it is that what is most important about the phenomenon of popular auto-canonization is its implications for those of us in the academy who are eagerly engaged in the act of canon-opening: for while we may wish to open up the canon, we cannot escape it. We face a paradox. While we claim that we seek to open up the canon, we actually do so hesitantly and partially, because were we to open it fully—or to demolish it altogether—we would have to open it up to the very cultural needs or desires that we opened up the canon to escape. Manilow, Coppola, Ashford and Simpson, Diana Ross, and countless others, therefore, define for us the horizon or limits of our endeavors, even as we struggle to redefine ourselves in the act of defining them. And it is with that tight embrace of reciprocal self-legitimation in which popular and elite culture, canonical and non-canonical literature, and the academy and society at large are clinched that this analysis, like any analysis of the problem, must end.

[Recipe]

## LIME-CONGEALED SALAD

From *Mama's Cooking: Celebrities Remember Mama's Best Recipe*, by Esther Blumenfeld and Lynne Alpern, published by Peachtree, in Atlanta. Jimmy Carter contributed this recipe, which he says was his mother's favorite.

- 1 3 oz. package lime Jell-O
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 cup small marshmallows
- 1 cup (drained) crushed pineapple
- ¾ cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 6 oz. cream cheese, softened at room temperature

Dissolve Jell-O in hot water. Refrigerate. When it cools and starts to congeal, add the marshmallows, pineapple, and pecans. In a separate bowl, whip cream until it forms soft peaks. Stir into softened cream cheese.

Fold into Jell-O mixture, spread in 9" x 9" square pan. Refrigerate until set. Cut into squares and serve on lettuce leaves. (Can be decorated with a blob of mayonnaise topped with a cherry.) Serves eight.

[Memoir]

## A WRITER'S BLOCKS

By John Updike, from the October issue of the Boston Review. This passage will appear in Updike's autobiography, *Self-Consciousness*, to be published this spring by Knopf.

There were, among my childhood equipment, several kinds of blocks: big, elemental ABCs, enameled the colors of the rainbow and holding their letters in sans-serif intaglio that a finger could trace; and smaller blocks of more intricate texture, with a serifed alphabet and objects like apples and bananas and a railroad caboose lifted in bas-relief from a flatness hollowed between rims that were in turn lightly in-



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cised. This second set, put in the mouth, tasted of wood and was painted only on the raised parts, much as type is inked.

What early intimations of the printing process tumbled in on me with my manipulations, my assembly and disassembly of my bushel basket full of blocks, I can only retrospectively guess at; but I still carry within me the thrill when, lifted up on the thickness of some books to my mother's typewriter, I began to tap it, and saw the perfect letterforms leap up on the paper rolled around the platen. It was a little portable Remington with elite type, and she still uses it. Its sound, as she typed away in the front bedroom of our home in eastern Pennsylvania, at the stories and novels that were mailed to New York in their brown envelopes and were then mailed back, rattled through the long house, whose downstairs stretched from the front-door letter slot to the icebox on the back kitchen wall. One of my few memories of being rebuked by my mother involves a day when I was sick and home from school: the front room was somehow the sickroom as well as my mother's workroom, and, feeling revived enough to share my cheerful thoughts with her as she typed away, I was shocked when she asked me to be quiet. In my mother's head existed, evidently, an entire rival world that could not co-exist with the real world of which I was, I had felt, such a loved component. I am not sure that I had hitherto realized that I had, within my mother's attention, competitors.

The writing enterprise that so engaged her presented itself to me first as a matter of graphic symbols; the tangible, precise indented forms of those alphabet blocks and the typewriter's smart little leap of imprintation were part of the general marvel of reproduced imagery, of comic strips and comic books and books and magazines and motion pictures. This last looks like the anomalous term in a sequence, the one that must be circled on the aptitude exam, but in fact, in that pre-video Thirties world, the world of the movies and the world of the popular press were so entwined, and the specific world of Walt Disney was so promiscuously manifested in animated cartoons and cartoon strips and children's books and children's toys, that no anomaly was felt. The projector in effect printed with its beam of light the film upon the screen, and the stylized activities one saw there were being watched simultaneously in a thousand theaters. A potentially infinite duplication was the essence; an essence wed for me to the smell of inked paper, dead pulped paper quickened into life again and again by the stamped image of "Dick Tracy" or "Captain Easy" or "Alley Oop." The very crudities and flecked imperfections of the process and the technical vocab-

ulary of pen line and hatching and Benday fascinated me, drew me deeply in, as perhaps a bacteriologist is drawn into the microscope and a linguist into the niceties of a foreign grammar.

I loved comic strips. I copied their characters onto sheet after sheet of blank paper; I traced my copies onto plywood and cut them out with a coping saw and set them in rows on the shelf in my bedroom; I scissored my favorite strips out of the newspaper and bound them in little long books with those paper fasteners like split brass nails and covers of white cardboard, lettered by me in India ink and crayon. The materials for all this derivative artistry—plywood, paper fasteners in various lengths, stiff cardboard in sheets wider than my arm was long—were widely available in my part of Pennsylvania, which had a strong artsy-craftsy side and yet lacked the sophistication to cast a single chilling breath upon my innocent infatuation with popular graphic culture.

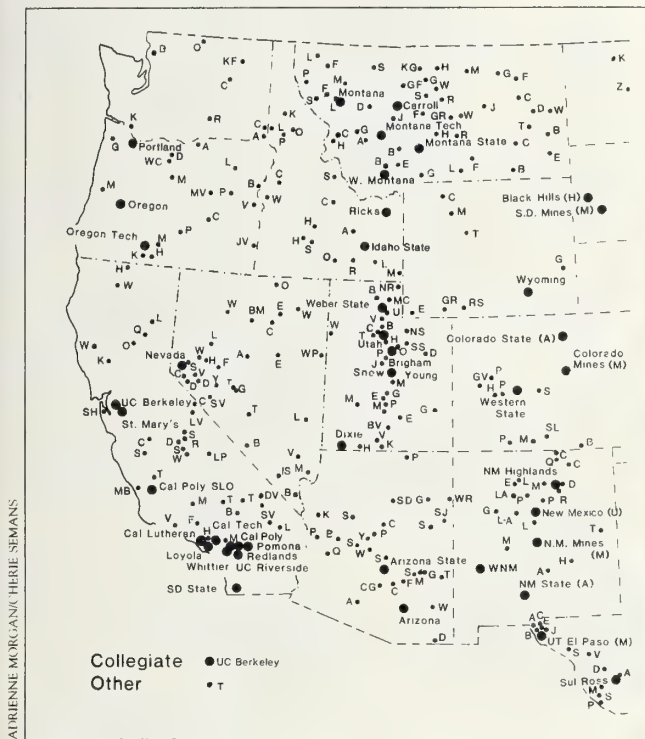
On Saturdays, as I grew older, I was permitted to roam downtown Reading for an hour or two, and the hand-lettered signs and window displays also seemed part of a wonderful artificial world susceptible to new installments but exempt from decay and weediness in the way of the organic world. In the five-and-tens in one block of Penn Square—Kresge's, Woolworth's, McCrory's—a counter would hold Big Little Books, chunky volumes costing a dime, assembled from comic strips, with a panel on the recto page facing a verso page of simple text; I collected these, and shelled out dimes not only for the new issues but for the valuable antique, the vintage "Mickey Mouse" or "Terry and the Pirates," that sometimes showed up on the counter before the new war economy swept Big Little Books into the dustbin along with toys of real rubber and soldiers of real lead and tin toys stamped "Made in Japan."

As adolescence approached, my fervor for consecutive square panels and words inside "talk balloons" moved on to magazine cartoons, as printed in *Collier's* and the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Liberty*. I cut them out, making a hard choice when two were back-to-back, and pasted them in scrapbooks that became unwieldably thick. (All this saving a child does! At one point I even saved the box scores of an entire baseball season, both leagues, since Philadelphia had a last-place team in both.) The varieties of cartoon style—the shaky pen lines of Gardner Rea and Chon Day, the dashing washes of Garrett Price and John Ruge—offered endless matter for the eyes to ponder, endless escape, into linecut or finely screened black and white, out of life's drab polychrome. And when, during the war, the *New Yorker* began to arrive through our letter slot, the world of magazines



[Map]

# MONOGRAMMED LANDSCAPES



From "Hillside Letters in the Western Landscape," by James J. Parsons, in *Landscape*, Vol. 30, No. 1, a tri-annual published in Berkeley, California. Parsons writes that the practice of creating large letters from concrete or painted stones probably began in 1905 with the construction of a seventy-foot C by students at Berkeley and proliferated throughout the Western states because of the availability of undeveloped, treeless slopes. Most of the approximately 250 letters on the map were constructed by student groups. The M, above, was built in 1910 by what is now the Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology in Butte. The W was built in 1923 at Western State College of Colorado, in Gunnison. Since the compilation of this map, Parsons has identified at least six more letters in the Western states. Parsons is a professor emeritus of geography at the University of California, Berkeley.

expanded into a new dimension, of better cartoons better displayed, of a lovely and flexible makeup built around little decorative drawings by Abe Birnbaum and James Thurber and a host of discreet initials. Thinking the cartoons too high and complex a goal, and the prose and poetry quite beyond me, I used to send in my little ink-and-wash spot drawings in brown envelopes stolen from my mother's desk, and like her short stories they would faithfully come back. The bounce of their return at least demonstrated that there was something solid out there, that this intoxicating vapor of printed material had a source, which one might someday, like Dorothy following the yellow brick road, reach.

The fierce reality that I had allowed this rumored world, this Oz, of cartoon syndicates and animation studios and magazine offices to assume within myself bespeaks some inner defect, some vacuum that nothing intimate and actual could fill, and my subsequent career carries

coarse traces of its un-ideal origins in popular, mechanically propagated culture. The papery self-magnification and immortality of printed reproduction was central to my artistic impulse; I had no interest in painting or sculpting, in creating the unique beautiful object, and have never been able to sustain interest in the rarified exercise of keeping a journal. I drew, in black and white, and then I drifted, by way of Ogden Nash and Phyllis McGinley and Morris Bishop, into light verse, and very slowly—not until college age, really—into the attempt to fabricate short stories. The idea of writing a novel came even later and presented itself to me, and still does, as *making a book*; I have trouble distinguishing between the functions of a publisher and those of a printer. The printer, in my primitive sense of the literary enterprise, is the solid fellow, my only real partner, and everyone else an intermediary between him and myself. My confused yearnings merged the notions of print,

## CHAPTER FOUR

A pale silver light moonlight streamed through the shut window. Clara struggled desperately to be awake. She brushed the thought of enduring another nightmare. She realized the prospect of another encounter with the strange old man. Why she lurked in her dark dream.

Suddenly like a wave of thunder in the better, the utter  
silence an echo of footsteps rang out in the air. Heavy as  
was a strange shuffle she had heard before. A soft shuffle came  
a strange clump that was coming closer and closer, heading towards  
her room. As it stopped outside her door she heard a soft knock with  
a stifled scream where she had heard the steps before.

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CHAPTER FOUR

A pale silver of moonlight streamed through the bedroom window. Clarice struggled desperately to stay awake. She dreaded the thought of enduring another nightmare. She dreaded the prospect of another encounter with the strange deformed figure who lurked in her dark dreams.

Suddenly like a clap of thunder in the deathly nocturnal silence an echo of footsteps rang out on the wooden stairway. It was a strange shuffle she had heard before. A clomp shuffle clomp



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Heaven, and Manhattan (a map of which looks like a type tray). To get into print was to be saved. And to this moment, a day when I have produced nothing printable, when I have not gotten any words out, is a day lost and damned as I feel it.

[Poem]

## WORDS FOR MY DAUGHTER

By John Balaban. From *Ploughshares*, Volume 14, No. 1. Balaban is the author of *The Hawk's Tale*, a children's book published last spring by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

About eight of us were nailing up forts in the mulberry grove behind Reds' house when his mother started screeching and all of us froze except Reds—fourteen, huge as a hippo—who sprang out of the tree so fast the branch nearly bobbed me off. So fast, he hit the ground running, hammer in hand, and seconds after he got in the house we heard thumps like someone beating a tire off a rim his dad's howls the screen door banging open Saw Reds barreling out through the tall weeds towards the highway the father stumbling after his fat son who never looked back across the thick swale of teasel and black-eyed Susans until it was safe to yell fuck you at the skinny drunk stamping around barefoot and holding his ribs.

Another time, the Connelly kid came home to find his alcoholic mother getting fucked by the milkman. Bobby broke a milk bottle and jabbed the guy humping on his mom. I think it really happened because none of us would loosely mention that wraith of a woman who slipped around her house and never talked to anyone, not even her kids.

Once a girl ran past my porch with a dart in her back, her open mouth pumping like a guppy's, her eyes wild. Later that summer, or maybe the next, the kids hung her brother from an oak. Before they hoisted him, yowling and heavy on the clothesline, they made him claw the creekbank and eat worms. I don't know why his neck didn't snap.

Reds had another nickname you couldn't say or he'd beat you up: "Honeybun." His dad called him that when Reds was little.

So, these were my playmates. I love them still for their justice and valor and desperate loves twisted in shapes of hammer and shard. I want you to know about their pain and about the pain they could loose on others. If you're reading this, I hope you will think, Well, my dad had it rough as a kid, so what? If you're reading this, you can read the news and you know that children suffer worse.

Worse for me is a cloud of memories still drifting off the South China Sea, like the nine-year-old boy, naked and lacerated, thrashing in his pee on a steel operating table and yelling "Dau. Dau," while I, trying to translate in the mayhem of Tet for surgeons who didn't know who this boy was or what happened to him, kept asking "Where? Where's the pain?" until a surgeon said "Forget it. His ears are blown."

I remember your first Halloween when I held you on my chest and rocked you, so small your toes didn't touch my lap as I smelled your fragrant peony head and cried because I was so happy and because I heard, in no metaphorical way, the awful chorus of Soeur Anicet's orphans writhing in their cribs. Then the doorbell rang and a tiny Green Beret was saying trick or treat and I thought *oh oh* but remembered it was Halloween and where I was. I smiled at the evil midget, his map light and night paint, his toy knife for slitting throats, said, "How ya doin', soldier?" and, still holding you asleep in my arms, gave him a Mars bar. To his father waiting outside in fatigues I hissed, "You shit," and saw us, child, in a pose I know too well.

I want you to know the worst and be free from it. I want you to know the worst and still find good. Day by day, as you play nearby or laugh with the ladies at People's Bank as we go around town and I find myself beaming like a fool, I suspect I am here less for your protection than you are here for mine, as if you were sent to call me back into our helpless tribe. ■



# SIGNING AWAY CANADA'S SOUL

Culture, identity, and the free-trade agreement  
*By Robertson Davies*

**I**s Canada a country without a mythology? The phrase is a provocative one, but it talks of an impossibility. Canada has a mythology, but it is only now, after about 400 years of history, being forced to decide what it is going to do about it. Somehow, by sheer weight of geography and the passage of time and a slow accumulation of national wealth, we have forced ourselves upon the attention of the world, and we are now in the uncomfortable position of having to discover, and in some measure to define, our national soul.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly, right at the outset, that the attitude born of this situation is not anti-American; it is simply pro-Canadian. We do not want to lose our identity, and we feel it suddenly threatened. We are different peoples, divided by geography and, most important of all, psychology. As a Canadian artist has said: "The U.S. frontier is in the West and its hero is an outlaw; the Canadian frontier is in the North and its hero is a policeman." Your aspiration toward life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is one that we admire, but our own is for public order and good government, which encourages the indigenous culture—the national soul—of which I now write.

Are we late in the day? Not really. I suppose if we were to assign sizes to national souls, as we do to hats, we might agree that the largest, most powerfully defined national soul in all of history—the unquestioned number nine—would be Russia, but it was not until the nineteenth century that anybody began to talk about the Russian soul. We are a little bit slow in getting off the mark, but we have begun; and the talk of the Canadian soul has begun for us, as it began for Russia, with our writers.

Telling Canada that she has a soul used to be rather like telling a stupid and unsophisticated girl that she was beautiful; she laughed coarsely and kicked you on the shins. A great deal of persuasion was needed before she would pay attention to what you were saying and stop calling you a fool. But during the past year or so something has happened which has made the

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and trade*

stupid girl listen a little more seriously.

I will not bore you with detail: simply, it is the desire of Canada's Progressive Conservative government, and particularly of the Progressive Conservative's leader and our Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, to enter into the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement. As drafted by the Progressive Conservatives and the Reagan administration, the agreement is one of the most sweeping economic accords ever negotiated between two nations. It would eliminate (over a ten-year period) all remaining tariffs of \$131 billion a year in merchandise trade between the two countries, the world's biggest trading partners. Barriers to U.S. investment in Canada and to the growth of U.S. service industries in Canada would also be lowered or eliminated. The opposition Liberals forced an election this past November by refusing to approve the pact in our Senate. The Progressive Conservatives won that election—after one of the most bitter campaigns in our history—with a parliamentary majority that appears to insure ratification of the agreement, which is due to take effect January 1. But it is my sense that the agreement will remain the crucial issue in Canadian politics, defining and dividing us. There is a proviso: either country has the right to cancel the agreement with six months' notice. Debate will not cease.

The government insists that such an agreement would enormously enlarge Canada's national wealth, create a great many new jobs, and open up the country to the sort of development that would bring in American capital. The business community is, in the main, delighted by this idea and supports it as big business usually does—by laughing at its opponents and people who do not understand how the world wags, and who should be content to trust their betters in such supremely important matters as money and trade. But there is substantial opposition to the free-trade proposal in Canada, stemming from a strong misgiving that it would threaten and eventually wipe out any indigenous Canadian culture. Loud and clear, a lot of Canadians are saying that there are things in our national life that are more important than money and trade, and the word "culture" is being used on the street, so to speak, in a new sense.

This new sense confuses many people in the United States. They seem to be astonished that Canada is not wholeheartedly in favor of the free trade agreement between our two countries. That such an opposition ever exists seems to them to be something new and inexplicable. In fact it is as old as the history of the two countries. Twice Canada made the decision not to throw in its lot with the United States: first, in 1776, when it did not join the revolution against British rule and became a haven for Loyalists who were forced to flee from what had been their homeland; then again, in 1812, when the United States invaded Canada to free it and was astonished to find that Canadians regarded themselves as free already. Is the free-trade question an occasion for a third such choice?

The immediate American response has been that the United States has no intention of taking over its northern neighbor. But—and here I must write with the uttermost tact—the gap between profession and practice is no less in U.S. foreign policy than it has been in that of any other great power when dealing with a smaller one. While expressing respect for our national sovereignty, U.S. submarines, uninvited, are in our Arctic waters and won't go away. American banks have sought to establish themselves in Canada without regard for our own banking system. We watch with dismay the cavalier treatment the United States gives to international agreements when these agreements do not suit American policy. With our strong Scottish strain, we murmur the words of Robert Burns:

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as others see us!  
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,  
And foolish notion.

The new sense in which "culture" is being used confuses our own ty-



ions, too, because they think they know what culture is. For them it is art galleries and ballet companies and opera companies and theater companies, to which some of them contribute quite generously. But they still live in a world where pictures and ballet and opera and theater are heavily dependent on imported goods, and they do not really believe that the fostering of such things within Canada could mean anything very much or employ any significant number of people. They are determined that the worth of an activity is related to the number of jobs it creates.

The Canadians who resist them know better. These cultural activities now have a local habitation in Canada, and the people they employ are important to the country in a way that the tycoons have not yet comprehended. When we send a symphony orchestra or a ballet company abroad, they make Canada known in an international world; they show we are part of the *internationale* of cultivated people, and that, insofar as international cultural exchange favors a climate of world peace, we are doing not at all badly. Furthermore, we are submitting ourselves to the judgment of the world on a level that asks for no favors and is not directly hitched to the world of business.

It is a matter of history, of an inherited governmental system, and of a national psychology. The question of the governmental system may be dealt with most easily. What virtually all Americans, and too many Canadians who deal in the international world of money, fail utterly to understand is that Canada is that political oddity—a socialist monarchy. We have created an elaborate and very successful welfare state under a monarchical setup, which is itself a declaration that there are things of national importance that are above politics and above simple matters of finance.

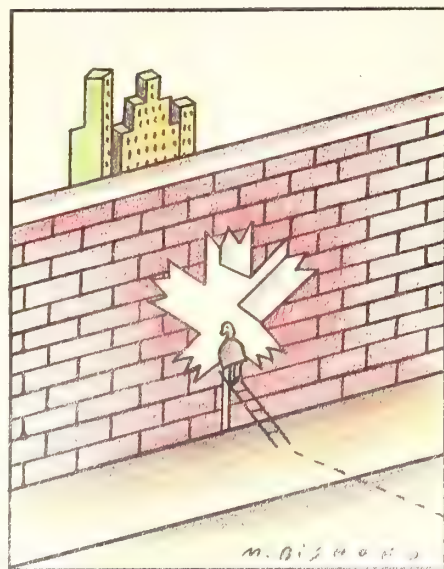
As to the matter of history: Canadian history is supposed to be dull. I would rather say that until the present century it had been such a sad story that we remembered it, but chose not to dwell on it. Our first European settlers, the French, came to Canada more than 400 years ago because life at home was hard and without hope. My mother's father was descended from a Scottish group for whom I have a special sympathy. Their origin was the uttermost northern part of Scotland, and so the gentlemen who arranged for their transport to Canada assumed that they would be best suited to a latitude comparable to the homes they left behind. So these wretches were deposited on the shore of James Bay, and if you do not happen to know where that is, I can assure you that it is a brutal place even for people from the Highlands.

After the American Revolution, Canada also received many thousands of political refugees from the new republic. When I say "refugees," I use the word in its fullest sense, for they had been deprived of civil rights, of land and money, their children were driven from the schools, and they were subject to all the harassment of the losers in any war. Many of these Loyalists had been prosperous in the American colonies before the revolution, and in Canada they were tireless in their labors to re-establish the economy and the educational and religious institutions that they had been forced to leave behind in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Does it seem to you that I am talking about a nation of losers, of exiles and refugees? Modern Canada is a prosperous country, but the miseries of its earliest white inhabitants are bred in the bone, and cannot, even now, be rooted out of the flesh.

In psychological terms, Canada is very much an introverted country, and it lives cheek by jowl with the most extroverted country in the world—indeed, the most extroverted country known to history. Let me explain the terms. In personal psychology, the extrovert is one who derives his energy from his contacts with the external world; for him, everything lies outside and he moves outward toward it, often without much sensitivity to the response of that toward which he moves. The introvert, on the other hand, finds his energy within himself, and his concern with the outside world is a

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matter of what approach the outside world makes to him. It is absurd to say that one psychological orientation is superior to the other. Both have their value, but difficulties arise when they fail to understand one another.

The extroversion of the United States is easy to see. The United States assumes that it must dominate, that its political and moral views are superior to all others, and that it is justified in interference with countries it thinks undemocratic, meaning unlike itself. It has also the happy extroversion characteristic of seeing all evil as exterior to itself, and resistance to that evil as a primary national duty.

Canada, the introverted country, feels no impulse to spread its domination beyond its own boundaries and has shown itself generous and sometimes absurdly permissive in its acceptance of the behavior and customs of the numberless refugees that seek its shores. Now, suddenly, because of a desire on the part of our government and our powerful and vocal business community, we are faced with the likelihood of what many of us see as eventually, a takeover not immediately political but cultural and, indeed, spiritual. We have built up our arts by means not approved of in the States: a lot of public money, for instance, goes into the support of our national broadcasting company, which is one of the things that knits together a vast land still sparsely populated. We have a flourishing National Film Board. Music, opera, ballet, and theater receive public support in a measure which is not adequate—when have artistic people ever considered any degree of support adequate?—but which recognizes their significance in our national life. Although the performing arts are important and are easily seen to be important, it is by our literature that we have made our deepest impression on the state, of course, cannot beget a literature and can do very little to support it, except for grants to writers thought to be promising. But grants cannot ensure public acceptance, and the acceptance Canadian literature now enjoys all over the world rests simply on the quality of the work—quality and individuality.

How gratifying this is to Canadian writers I cannot begin to express. I have traveled a good deal in Europe during the past five years, and everywhere I've gone I've been astonished and somewhat breathless to find how

much we mean to friends abroad of whom we know nothing. Canada, through its writers, has suddenly come under international literary scrutiny.

**Y**ou may ask why I suppose that the free-trade agreement with the United States, and all that it implies, would alter or endanger this situation. But I can remember—and many other Canadian authors can remember—being offered publication in the United States on the condition that I make a few alterations that would transfer the scene of my novel to the United States. To this day that is virtually a condition of having a motion picture made of a Canadian novel. We have a Canadian film industry, and our films are much respected at international festivals. But we cannot get distribution for them in the United States because they are seen as a form of competition with Hollywood, and Hollywood is not the most generous or culturally conscious part of the great Republic—it doesn't like any sort of competition. Film distribution throughout the North American continent is in U.S. hands, and the free-trade agreement will not change that.

Nor is the free-trade agreement going to be friendly toward our publishing industry, which is substantial and has had to maintain its position through adroit maneuvering and government assistance of an indirect kind. Such governmental assistance will undoubtedly be opposed by American publishers as a restraint on their freedom of trade and as unfair competition.

Will it matter? Yes, it will. Canada is waking up. Canada, where biblical references are still understood by quite a few people, sees itself suddenly as Naboth's vineyard. You remember that the great King of Samaria coveted Naboth's vineyard and made him an offer for it. Naboth replied, "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."





oor Naboth lost the fight and was traduced and stoned to death. But those of us who have Canada's newly found nationalism and national culture dear to our hearts have hopes of reversing that nasty story and keeping our vineyard for ourselves and our children.

This dispute is particularly difficult because one of the parties to the difference does not see that there is any dispute at all. An American tycoon, commenting on the free-trade proposal, said, as if he were disposing of a trivial objection, "It's all business, isn't it?" But that is precisely what it is not, and why it is not so is extraordinarily hard to make clear to what may be called the extroverted Front Office mentality. A few months ago a friend of mine, an important Canadian publisher, spoke on this theme before an influential group of businesspeople in New York City. My friend was trying to explain why a distinctively Canadian culture was important and why we were determined to preserve it. After she had done her best she was astonished to be asked by the wife of an American publisher, "I don't get it. You keep talking about *Canadians*. Aren't you all Americans too?"

Americans are precisely what we are not and what we don't want to be. And Americans, charming, extroverted, certain of their acceptance everywhere, simply cannot understand this. And, of course, it is a problem. A Canadian historian, Arthur Lower, once said that we Canadians love England but don't like Englishmen, and that we love Americans but can't stand the United States. I have been trying to explain why this is so.

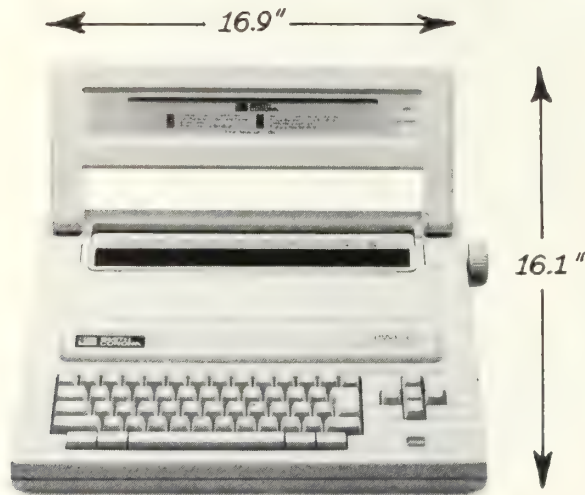
**W**hy am I so obstinate in this matter of the trade agreement? What am I defending? In part it is our land. I believe strongly that the land upon which one lives influences one's character, and our land has given us qualities that are more akin to the Scandinavian countries than to any part of the United States except New England. I have spoken of our national introversion, and I see sympathies in our national feeling that attach us more strongly to the lands of Ibsen and Strindberg than to anything to the south of us. And as our land makes us what we are, it of course gives its quality to the best of our literature. Douglas Le Pan speaks in one of his poems of the Canadian as a "wild Hamlet, with the features of Horatio." That is a striking figure and one I have pursued in my own work.

A country's literature is a crystal ball into which its people may look to understand their past and their present, and to find some foretaste of their future. The pictures are never simple, never wholly clear, and certainly never didactic. They need interpretation; not the interpretation of the literary critic, unless the critic is a person of gifts comparable to the writer, but the interpretation of the heart, the sympathy and understanding that are the partners of insight. Canada has, over the years, produced such a literature, and during the past quarter of a century, that literature has grown to an extraordinary maturity. It has done so with the encouragement of a growing body of readers who want to hear what their writers have to say and make it part of their national consciousness. I avoid the term "national culture" because it has been abused by people who think of culture as a commodity, separable from the rest of the national life. Culture is an ambience, a part of the air we breathe.

That special ozone is now to be breathed in Canada, because it arises from the land itself—not a few acres of snow but a country of immensely varied beauty of landscape and of season, including our lovely and dangerous winters. It arises from our history, not dull but simply not dwelled upon, somber in palette but with wonderful flashes of brilliance. It arises from our psychology, which takes its color from the land and the history. Political unity with a more aggressive and powerful country may not mean the death of the essence of one's own country. But such a link could be dangerous and in some respects depleting, and I wish the majority of Canadians had had the good sense to declare against it. A strong link already exists, and it is sufficient without turning the link into a shackle. ■

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don't want to be*

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# A FURY OF SYMBOLS

How the Sixties erupted in one man's life

By Joel Agee

Our high-school science teacher told us that matter was born of absolute chance and evolved by incalculable multiplications of accident to the formation of galaxies, planets, fish, mammals, minds, and high-school science tests. This always seemed to me more fantastical than any of the creation myths science was here to supplant. Conversely, if he was right, there had to be more to the fall of dice than numbers, or more to numbers than mathematicians surmised.

In New York in the mid-Sixties, when I was in my early twenties, I gave this question more serious consideration than was good for me. I took a philosophical (so I thought) interest in the kind of events C. G. Jung termed "synchronistic," and this before coming across his famous study of the subject. I thought I was breaking new ground. Imperceptibly, I became captivated, enthralled, obsessed, until for a few weeks my mind, body, and surroundings erupted in a synchronistic delirium.

I think I caught the virus from reading André Breton's *Nadja*, a book I found beautiful and disturbing—beautiful because of its valiant fidelity to what is unknowable, its hatred of all explanations; disturbing because of the vision it presented of a possibly boundless kingdom opposed to the imperialistic designs of reason, a savage and innocent land where things and people obey the unpredictable dictates of chance and of poetry. It was disturbing also in ways that Bre-

ton could not have intended: for Nadja, the young woman who guided him to the outer borders of that kingdom, and who left him to take up permanent residence there, was probably insane. Like a boy playing with fire—cautiously, since he is in secure command of that reason whose general rule he deplores—the poet exults in the radiant, diaphanous presence of his muse; but she is burning and is given no voice in his book for so much as a scream.

I envied the Surrealists their coffeehouse trances and theater scandals, their *amour fou*, their magical Paris. New York had no poetry that I could see. A hard, epic prose it had, made of stone and steel and dirt and glass, bright by day and dark by night, endless reams of it; but poetry—I couldn't see it. However, the magic of chance, I thought, must be present here as much as there, now as much as then. I had already had intimations of it. Everyone does: you think of an acquaintance you haven't seen for years and wonder why she has entered your thoughts, and as you turn the corner, there she is, stepping out of a taxi. Or, in conversation with a friend in a restaurant, say, at the moment when you both tacitly agree to avoid a certain issue, you notice it has become the topic of discussion at a neighboring table. This, I assumed, was the household variety of surrealist experience, available, indeed inescapable for everyone, and one had only to make it the object of one's most expectant attention to begin to harvest the first shining fruits of that enchanted garden.

I wrote down my dreams, practiced "automat-

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surrealism, I  
had stumbled  
upon augury.  
I didn't tell  
anyone. But I  
was excited*

ic writing," and above all, collected coincidences; I searched for them, hunted them. The first finds were interesting, but lackluster. They weren't finds at all, I realized, but products: I had made them. I had to get out of the way, open myself wider. Smoking marijuana, I noticed, helped loosen the grip of habitual thought processes long enough for genuine serendipities to happen, the sort of accidents that refuse to fade into oblivion but cling to the mind with tenacious little roots of metaphor, sprouting significance even when you don't want it (but of course I did). These were the genuine article, but comparing my finds with those of Breton, they were still commonplace, flat. It must be the difference between New York and Paris, I thought. And then the coincidences started getting stranger, more interesting, in a way more artistic, as if in the web of random happenings there was a pixieish imagination that responded and played up to my curiosity as if to an audience. Little poems of fortuity.

For example, one day I was listening to people talking about Vietnam in the office of the National Opinion Research Center, where I worked; not an argument, everyone there was against the American intervention, just a quiet, rather pensive, end-of-the-day conversation. The sun had already set, and I was gazing out the window at an unusual cloud formation: it looked like a long dark quill hovering over a piece of paper, or more likely, parchment, with almost perfectly straight edges, certainly an uncommon feature in a cloud. I drew a colleague's attention to it while the conversation continued. "All it needs is a hand," he said. "The hand's invisible," I replied. Then someone in the background said, not in reference to the clouds but to the conversation about Vietnam: "How do you think history gets written, Sam? How do you think it gets written?" The others laughed for some reason, and at that moment a dark red streak developed precisely where the point of the quill touched the page. The streak lengthened into a horizontal line as the conversation shifted to more trivial topics, then it started bleeding toward the bottom, and then it was five o'clock and people were putting on their coats, and my colleague and I looked at each other and silently shook our heads. I wanted to talk about what had happened, and he said he'd almost rather not, it was just too strange, down to the name Sam—there was no one called Sam in the office. "What's so strange about that?" I asked. "Look at those colors," he said, and then (I'm afraid this sounds unbelievable, but it was so) I saw that the sky behind the quill and the bloodied parchment was distinctly divided into three horizontal fields of color: a

fiery red on the bottom, bone white in the middle, sky blue on top.

Similar experiences followed. It seemed by way of surrealism, I had stumbled upon augury. That felt vaguely like witchcraft, like divination by tea leaves and entrails and hot air and whatnot, and I was a little embarrassed, didn't tell anyone. But I was excited. If this was an archaic way of knowledge, why should it be any less valid, any more uncertain than our usual way? And what was our usual way, after all? To go for understanding until one touched on something—most often a set of words—upon which one felt justified in conferring the status of truth; and then, if one was inclined to be thorough, one might test that truth, tap its solidity with doubt as with a felt hammer—not too hard, lest it break—listening for some telltale hollow or flat sound, and if all went well, one was pleased to have added to one's store of knowledge. Maybe there were thinkers who pushed their doubt all the way to the end; who had the courage for that—or the faith.

But this other way was like being surprised in the dark. You'd be listening, as usual, half consciously, to some obscure worry or half-formulated question, when all of a sudden an answer would appear and answer, sometimes very dramatically. Like the way I drove out to the country and spent the greater part of the afternoon sketching an oak on the edge of a cliff, a stream in the valley below, and a factory chimney with its plume of smoke in the distance. When I drew, the tree and the chimney became symbolic antagonists in my mind, a sentinel of nature confronting its demonic parody, and to stress this idea I darkened the smoke a little, made it billow more portentously than it was in reality. Pleased with the half-finished drawing, I drove home, determined to come back and complete it the next weekend. When I returned, the tree was no longer there: it had fallen root over crown into the valley along with a chunk of the cliff it had stood on, and in the background the chimney stood smokeless, resting after long labor.

That one frightened me. I tried to retrace the steps that had led me there. Surely the sense of having been given a sign was an error in thinking, a delusion. Surely a coincidence was just a meaningless chance event, and the wish to derive significance from it ought to be dismissed as a product of fear, a craving for certainty even at the cost of all common sense. But just as a small shift of perspective opened up streams of communication between the heart with its questions and fears and the wordless void, which appeared to be not indifferent or alien at all but trembling with a responsiveness that seemed almost intimate. This was not just a game. It was as if there



re a voice in the dark-  
 is that spoke in signs  
 and symbols that teased  
 the mind with meaning  
 beyond comprehension,  
 that were decipherable  
 a way of feeling; a  
 voice that claimed a  
 kind of exclusive and se-  
 cret loyalty of me, as if it  
 were jealous of ordinary  
 course and thought  
 could be betrayed by  
 translation; and in all its  
 messages there was a  
 hint of a promise: Go  
 with me a little way, and  
 I will take you far. And  
 I believed that. At the  
 same time I was pro-  
 foundly alarmed. A  
 sense of destruction was  
 under way, and I was  
 being given foreknowl-  
 edge of it. Not the tree,  
 of course, that was  
 just a symbol of some-  
 thing much vaster and  
 darker.

The tide was rising,  
 and still I went about  
 my coincidence-hunting  
 with the patient expect-  
 ancy of a beachcomber,  
 working my finds away  
 from a special ledger I  
 had marked "Chance"—  
 until one day the sea

came pouring in through the windows.

On a Saturday evening when my roommate,  
 George, was away for the weekend, and Su-  
 san, my girlfriend, was visiting her parents,  
 a stranger knocked on the door of my fifth-  
 floor apartment on East Tenth Street between  
 avenues A and B. I opened the door without  
 asking who it was or looking through the  
 peephole. Standing in front of me was a light-  
 skinned black man about my age who intro-  
 duced himself as Conrad and said he was a  
 friend of Max, the bookseller on Eighty-sixth  
 Street and Amsterdam Avenue, and also of  
 George, which surprised me, since I thought I  
 knew George's friends. He was dressed in a pe-  
 culiar outfit: khaki riding breeches with high  
 lace-up boots, a frayed leather jacket with the  
 collar turned up; and in his hand, a riding crop.  
 He said George had told him I had bought some  
 LSD and wasn't about to drop it, so wouldn't I  
 sell it to him, Conrad—he wanted it badly, and  
 he had brought along the book I had ordered



from Max—it had just  
 arrived in the mail.

I should explain a few  
 things before I go on.  
 Marijuana was forbid-  
 den, of course, and pos-  
 session of it was often  
 harshly punished, some-  
 times with years in jail,  
 but LSD wasn't prohib-  
 ited yet. Knowledge  
 about its marvelous ef-  
 fects had only recently  
 begun to trickle down  
 from the university lab-  
 oratories to the streets.  
 That's why I had bought  
 myself some of the stuff.  
 But I had also read  
 Timothy Leary's warn-  
 ings in the *Harvard  
 Advocate* about the im-  
 portance of "set and  
 setting," and Aldous  
 Huxley's description of  
 some hellish moments  
 on mescaline. I didn't  
 want to cleanse the  
 doors of perception with  
 a dishrag. So I had  
 stored the capsule in the  
 refrigerator for the  
 vague eventuality of a  
 hassle-free weekend in  
 the country.

And now came this  
 character wanting to  
 buy it, introducing him-

self as a friend of both George and Max, and  
 bringing me simultaneous messages from both.  
 It seemed just a bit unlikely, and I had a fleeting  
 suspicion that Conrad was a narcotics agent  
 who was on to my dealer and out to entrap me  
 for possession of marijuana (using the acid as a  
 pretext); so, as I invited him in—out of courte-  
 sy to George and Max, more than anything—I  
 not only told him I didn't want to sell him the  
 acid I had but also decided to leave my grass hid-  
 den behind the sink instead of offering to share  
 a smoke with him. Conrad had grass of his own,  
 however, a neat little row of carefully rolled  
 joints in his breast pocket. His eyes were ner-  
 vous, alert, but friendly: I could see no threat in  
 them. The book, it turned out, was not the one  
 I had ordered—*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*—  
 but something I had never heard of: the *I Ching*,  
 or *Book of Changes*.

We sat down on the rug and smoked. I put on  
 Thelonious Monk's *Brilliant Corners*, and Con-  
 rad smiled broadly, closed his eyes, and slowly

*Knowledge  
 about LSD's  
 marvelous  
 effects had only  
 recently begun  
 to trickle down.  
 That's why I  
 had bought  
 some*

*I closed my  
eyes. Something  
was working a  
pattern into  
the cloth  
of existence*

shook his head as if in unbelieving appreciation. We talked about this and that. Then he asked me again to sell him the acid and shyly offered to pay double whatever I had paid for it. He really wanted the stuff; it had to do with—he made a gesture with his left hand that seemed to indicate some vaporous cumulative disorder with roundish contours—“everything,” he said, smacking the riding crop against his boot and frowning at the rug.

I asked him what he thought dropping acid would do for him. He didn't answer. He sucked at the last millimeter of viable joint and asked with gestures, holding his breath, if I wanted to eat the roach. I shook my head. After letting out a prolonged, hissing exhalation, he popped the roach in his mouth, swallowed it, and said, “It's the best part, man.” Then we laughed, and I was reassured by his relaxed and comfortable way of chuckling, when abruptly, without looking at me—he was busy lighting another joint—he asked me where I'd gotten the acid, and I felt my hands grow cold and I thought: he's an enemy and he knows I've got dope stashed away and he wants to get at my dealer. Then he handed me the joint and I refused it and, fumbling for the most immediate way to avoid having to answer his question, I offered to sell him my capsule after all.

“Are you sure?”

“Yeah, sure, what the hell, who knows when I'll get around to dropping it.”

“Shit, man, that's real generous of you.”

As I returned from the fridge and saw him standing there in his boots and jodhpurs (he'd left the crop lying on the floor) with a look of anticipatory excitement on his face, I felt like a fool for conceiving of this nervous innocent as a narc—especially when he insisted on cautiously pouring the contents of the capsule on a piece of newspaper on the table to see what the stuff looked like; or was he mistrusting *me* now? And maybe with good reason, for the acid turned out to be a little mound of fine white powder.

“Looks like baking powder,” he said.

“Certainly does,” I said. I was embarrassed.

Conrad licked his finger, dipped it in the powder, and put the finger in his mouth.

“Tastes like sugar,” he said.

“No shit!” I picked up a sizable pinch of the stuff and put it on my tongue. “It is sugar!”

He tested it again. It was definitely sugar.

“I can't believe it,” I said. This time I wet my finger too and lifted off some sugar and tasted it again.

“Confectioners' sugar,” Conrad said laughing. “Good stuff!” and he took some more.

Then I realized, “It's *supposed* to be sugar—it usually comes in sugar cubes!”

“You mean . . .”

“Yeah, that's right. You better eat the rest of it.”

“Shit!”

He cautiously picked up the paper, folded it into a funnel, and carefully poured the remainder of the sugar into his mouth. I offered him a glass of water to wash it down.

“I guess we dropped it,” he said.

“Yup. I guess we did.” I had taken about a third of the dose.

We went back into the living room and sat down, Conrad on a couch, I in an armchair. Conrad lit another joint. I put on John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*. So much for set and setting.

**W**e chatted for a while, and then we fell silent. The music had stopped. Something was happening. Something was snaking through my brain and my body: Energy. Thought. Sex. Memory. Imagination. I reached for a pencil and a sheet of paper on the coffee table near me and wrote, “Sending out thoughts . . .” I imagined flashing sabers, thundering hooves: I was some sort of general, a field marshal of the mind; it felt terrific to have such power, but the very next word that presented itself, “like,” proved almost insuperably difficult, it had “kill” stuck halfway down its throat; did I really want to wage war, and with whom? I fought my way through all four letters and felt the surge of martial power again. “Sending out thoughts like . . .” Like what? I wrote down the word that came to mind: “an army.” Houses were burning. A naked infant lay in the heart of a blue flower, a wasp came and stung it. No!

I closed my eyes. Something was working a pattern into the cloth of existence, a million threaded pattern of whirling, writhing images woven of thoughts, impulses, fears, and desire all braided together, sublime and sinister, cruel and innocent, beautiful and hideous, and the shuttling loom on which all this was woven and re woven was the human brain, mine and everyone's, and there was no way to stop it. I opened my eyes. Convulsions in the grain of the wood floor: snakes. The room was sugar-sweet, powder-soft. I looked at what I had written and added, “of snakes.” It took an endless time to write the letters. The *s* alone held so much more meaning than the whole word. When it reappeared again at the end the implications seemed enormous. I drew a picture:



Then I dropped the pencil and looked up. There was Conrad with his eyes closed and his



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We went  
to Tompkins  
Square Park to  
sit. Every once  
in a while  
someone would  
come along who  
seemed to feel  
part of things

mouth smiling half-open and his head tilted as if listening to distant music. On the long wall over his head was an Egyptian mural, the paint flaked or faded with the millennia, a king in perfect Egypto-profile holding a double-shafted whip in front of his chest; minuscule slaves in a cowering row before him proffering food, live beasts, and other gifts; behind him, in lock-step, attractive female attendants with transparent garments and palpable behinds and breasts and long, gesturing hands; above him, the sun with rays ending in hands; the whole thing in cerulean blue and rose and some kind of glittering aqua green; was it paint or inlay, or both? When I leaned in to look, however, it was gone. But Conrad was there, Conrad as Pharaoh, his crop the emblem of kingly power, and I, a slave?

By about midnight, Conrad was Conrad again, a New York hipster who, it turned out, had recently joined an equestrian club on the Upper West Side. We went up on the roof. The air over the city was very clear. The moon and the stars were out, and we could see the Empire State Building all lit up. I pointed out the black silhouette of the Con Ed plant a few blocks above us by the East River, its smokestacks strangely slanted, the way the Expressionists used to draw smokestacks. In charcoal, in fact. Conrad said the smokestacks looked vertical to him, but charcoal seemed just right. And the Empire State Building was done in pastel on a black ground. In fact the whole landscape was a symbolic picture.

"How so?" I asked.

"Well, the Con Ed building has no light, and it looks mean as all hell. It looks like it's crawling out of the river while everyone's asleep, and frankly it's scaring the shit out of me. But there's the Empire State Building. It stands there like an angel of light; it sees far and wide, and it's



holding up a spear . . ."

At that moment, the lights on the Empire State Building went out. I swear they did—all of them. We just stood there gaping and shaking our heads. The Con Ed building was puffing smoke through its stacks. "Damn," I said. "that's where the light comes from!" Conrad burst out laughing and slapped his thighs. I laughed too, but I felt very uneasy.

Around dawn we went to Tompkins Square Park to sit on the grass. People were starting the day's errands, buying newspapers, going to church. Others were sitting on the park benches, feeding the pigeons and squirrels, talking, reading. We observed how crooked most people were in their bodies, how they carried themselves as if they had stolen a piece of existence and hoped no one would notice. Every once in a while someone would come along who seemed to

feel part of things, who was quietly joyful in his or her movements, whose face shone. Then we noticed a large yellow turd a few feet away from us in the grass. It formed the apex of an equilateral triangle of which Conrad was the right corner and I the left. Impossible to ignore such a presence once you've seen it. We thought of moving to another part of the lawn, but it felt uncomfortable to break the triangle. We waited. Something seemed about to happen.

Far away, at the other end of the park, we saw a drunk staggering from bench to bench, panhandling, and I prophesied: "He's going to come here. He'll climb the fence and sit down in the shit." I immediately regretted saying that. The drunk worked his way in our direction, climbed over the iron fence, and asked us for a dime. (That was 1965, when a dime was still worth asking for.) We reached into our pockets and gave him some change. He thanked us, blessed us, introduced himself as Bill or Jack, held out his hand for us to shake, staggering all



while. "Watch out behind you," I said as I took his hand. "No problem," he said, "plenty room," and carefully, without looking behind him, sat down in the shit. We got up and left again.

I walked Conrad to the subway at Astor Place. I was quivering, a fine tremor all through my body. I prayed: "Please make this stop. No more." Conrad stopped in front of a trash can full of discarded photographs, arty portraits of hydrants, puddles, shoes, somebody's ear, and so on. He pulled out a picture of a young woman with large breasts half revealed by a plunging neckline, and started walking again, looking at the picture and smiling. Then he tore the face out of the picture and threw the rest away. "She reminds me of someone I know," he said. For some reason his doing that allayed most of my anxiety.

When we parted, he skipped down the subway stairs and turned around and said, "I love you, brother," and I said I loved him too.

Back in the apartment, I found the picture of the double-snake infinity sign and the words I had written at the beginning of the trip:

SENDING OUT THOUGHTS  
LIKE AN ARMY OF SNAKES

Some part of the brain had edited and completed the phrase overnight—I knew what I had to do. I crossed out "snakes," replaced it with "serpents," and added:

TO SEARCH OUT THE ONE  
FROM WHOM ALL THOUGHT RECOILS

I slept until Susan dropped in Sunday evening. She cooked some soup for the two of us, and then we made love and I slept some more. When I woke up around midnight I examined the book Conrad had brought me and soon began to feel a familiar sensation at the base of my neck, the fine, not unpleasant, shiver of the uncanny. It wasn't just the book's strangeness—the arcane flavor of the English title, the sixfold tiers of straight and broken lines that preceded each chapter, the hundreds of cryptic fragments of verse (that's what I took them for), or the peculiar organization of the text into "Judgments," "Images," and "Lines." True, I had never seen anything remotely like it, but it was obviously a book, clearly an ancient text of Chinese origin and of some psychological interest, since Jung had written the foreword. But as I followed Jung's sample interrogation of the *I Ching* and its responses, it dawned on me that this wasn't a book in the ordinary sense; that it was a voice; that it conversed with its readers; that it was not only intelligent but in some sense alive. At least those were its claims, which Jung was trying to make palatable to a mind accustomed to a rationalist diet. A small storm began

to rise in my brain, I could feel it, excitement and disbelief and foreboding and faint disgust all whirling together. In the appendix was a set of instructions for "Consulting the Oracle." Not having access to fifty-one yarrow stalks, I used the coin method.

I tossed three pennies on the floor six times in a row, recording the combinations of heads and tails, shaking my head at my superstition and inwardly hoping for a reading that would at least roughly respond to my first question: "Who or what are you?" The chart at the end of the book referred me to the second line of the sixty-first hexagram:

A crane calling in the shade.  
Its young answers it.  
I have a good goblet.  
I will share it with you.

Those four lines did seem to answer my question very clearly, and they still do. If interpretation was needed, I would have rephrased the stanza as follows: "I am related to you as a wild bird is to its young. Though my real nature is hidden from you, I speak a language that you can understand. Moreover, you can reply to me, and I will hear you. I possess something of rich and mysterious value. I will share it with you."

I decided to repeat my experiment, more or less in the spirit of science, by framing the question as I had the first time: "Who or what are you?" and tossing the coins again, noting with a mixture of satisfaction and disappointment that the combination of heads and tails was different from the result of the first throw. This time I drew the fourth hexagram without any "changing lines"—an indication of a static or unambiguous situation. Imagine my astonishment when I read the Judgment of Hexagram Four:

Youthful Folly has success.  
It is not I who seek the young fool;  
The young fool seeks me.  
At the first oracle I inform him.  
If he asks two or three times, it is importunity.  
If he importunes, I give him no information.  
Perseverance furthers.

I passed the next few days in a fever of coin-tossing, page-turning, and record-keeping, interrupted only by eight unavoidable hours of work at the office and five hours reluctantly yielded to sleep. Susan was irritated, maybe jealous, too, of my obsession.

About a week after the acid trip, I received the following reading:

If one is not extremely careful,  
Someone may come up from behind and strike him.  
Misfortune.

At the risk of being called a fool once again, I

*It dawned  
on me that the  
'I Ching' wasn't  
a book in the  
ordinary sense;  
it was a voice*

He grabs my  
right arm with  
his left hand,  
whisks his right  
hand out of his  
coat pocket  
and shoots

asked the *I Ching* for an explanation and wrote down the answer:

A cry of alarm. Arms at evening and at night.  
Fear nothing.

Fear nothing! That was easy for the *I Ching* to say. I was worried. Susan suggested a psychological meaning. A violent and morbid streak had shown up in my dreams only recently. One dream in particular had disturbed me: "An old couple in bed. The man awakes and sits up. Death stands behind the bed in medieval robe and cowl. Using both hands, Death presses the wooden handle of his sickle against the old man's throat and says: 'We make the rounds three times a day.'"

I cast the coins once more the next morning, without asking a question. The oracle said:

One is enriched through unfortunate events.  
No blame, if you are sincere  
And walk in the middle,  
And report with a seal to the prince.

This made no sense to me at all, and I decided to shelve the *I Ching*. Confucius had said you had to be at least sixty before you could make intelligent use of this book. No doubt he was right.

**T**he following night, between 1 and 2 A.M., I was shot by a stranger in front of the door to my apartment.

It happened like this: I came home from a late movie with Susan. We got out of the subway at Astor Place and walked slowly east. Near Avenue A on St. Mark's Place, I stooped to pick up a small gray piece of paper. At the same moment I heard a soft high tinkling of bells across the street. I turned around: the street was empty. Susan had heard the bells too. The sound must have come from inside an apartment. The paper I picked up was some kind of playing card. Two question marks were printed on it, one right side up, the other upside down. On the opposite side were the words:

REVERSE  
OR  
EXCHANGE

I put the card in my pocket. We walked through Tompkins Square Park. It was very dark and unusually quiet. A police car slowly rolled by on Tenth Street. A small dog ran up to us, wagging its tail. I stretched out my hand to pet it. It yelped and ran away with its tail between its legs.

As we walked up the stairs to the apartment, I noticed two men following about one flight beneath us. I glanced down through the banister and saw the head of one of them, a black man with straightened hair. I assumed he lived in our

building. I kissed Susan as we walked up. Then searched for my keys and discovered that I had left them uptown at Susan's place. I knocked on the door. I heard music playing inside, and voices. George was giving a party. I heard a voice behind me and turned my head and saw the two men who had followed us up the stairs. Susan stepped up to the door and knocked again, a little louder. The door opened and George appeared and looked at Susan. The sound of music was louder now. Why hadn't he told me about the party?

This part of the memory looks unnaturally bright, maybe because the ceiling lamp in the hallway was broken: George, with his right hand, is holding the door open wide. His head lit from behind, has a halo of blonde curls. Susan stands before him in a dark coat, her head tilted, smiling up at him, offering him her face, her smile. I am behind her, out of her sight. And the men following us—I can't see their faces, but I think they're staring at me. Whether the nearer of the two men accosts me, I don't hear his voice (I think now that he must have said something dramatic, like "this is a stick-up!"), and I assume he's coming to the party. Many strangers come to our house when George gives a party, friends of friends. Now I see Conrad behind George in the kitchen, it's the first time I've seen him since the acid trip; I say "go ahead," indicating with my hand that the man and his friend should go in before me; Susan's inside already, and George has stepped back to make room for the strangers he thinks I've brought with me. The next moment all I see is the face of the man who will shoot me. His jaw has dropped, a mask of incomprehension. I suppose my face looked blank as well.

"Get in there!"

He looks mad. He takes me by the arm and shoves me toward the door. I turn around to face him, raising my hands, palms up: "What's the matter? What's going on?" This sends him into a rage. He grabs my right arm with his left hand and half pushes, half pivots me with a half-turn toward the door and whisks his right hand out of his coat pocket and shoots.

The bullet—this is a reconstruction, of course, I could have had no idea at the time what the bullet was doing or whether there was a bullet at all, it sounded so much like a cap gun; but the day after the shooting, a detective searched for the bullet in the kitchen and left in perplexity, shaking his head, and later George discovered a chip in the brick wall opposite the kitchen window and together we reconstructed the bullet's trajectory. I wish I could triangulate the dance of all those bodies in space: The gunman twirling me into alignment as Susan walks out of range into the living room and Conrad



ops over the sink to wash a glass and George, light from a self-protective reflex and alliance to me, half closes the door; then the pot: the bullet drills into my right side two and half inches from the navel, charring the rim of the entry wound, speeds through the thin layer of fat covering the internal organs, misses the testinal wall by a couple of millimeters, exits out an inch and a half to the left of the navel (o charring there), passes through the space between George and the open door, traverses the length of the kitchen, missing Conrad by a couple of feet, sails through the crack of the tightly opened window, crosses the courtyard, and smashes into a brick wall. That window was raised no higher than an inch off the sill, and the bullet did not graze the wood.

I was pleased with this last detail, and there was something like pride in that pleasure—not exactly as if I had done it, but as if I had been elected and transported beyond the reach of fate. Because I had been given to know from the beginning that I was past any harm. Even as I fell. For a moment nothing happened at all, I stood there empty, and then I thought this must be a joke, but I noticed my stomach was warm and my head was spinning and I comprehended that something unbelievable had happened, I had been shot in the stomach and this could be the end. And the strangest thing happened: the impact of this recognition resembled nothing so much as delight. No thought: I just stood there, amazed; and then I realized I would have to come back to this later because unless I felt he would shoot me again, and what came to mind was I fell, of all the mortal or lifesaving thoughts, was how I used to practice precisely this same limp collapse when I was a child and a friend pointed a stick at me and said bang: the pleasure it gave me, this pantomime of the body's reversion to the realm of things while the life crouched inside in secret delight.

I hit the floor and I could have burst out laughing but I had to lie still and now I remembered my mother pretending that she was dead—for which she had immediately apologized with a grievous urgency that puzzled me (I was about six), since it implied more guilt over her deception than I could imagine; I had been gripping her throat playfully, pretending I was the maniacal strangler we had seen in a movie—we were both laughing—when suddenly her head fell to the side and her eyes closed and she didn't respond to my calling her name and prodding her, until my voice must have sounded frightened or tearful. And then I thought, I mustn't do that to Susan, and opened my eyes, and Susan was standing in front of me, eyes bulging, fingertips over her mouth: "Ah! Ah! Ah!" but with her lips drawn back in a way that

suggested laughter. She may have been hoping it was all a joke, or trying to catch her breath, but my impression then was that she was disguising a soundless laugh with those strange little cries, and that her hand over her mouth was part of the concealment. It looked very strange, and I thought, oh Susan, love of my life, you have two faces, I am afraid of you. But then I noticed something in me was silently laughing also, as if in the knowledge that this was all pretense—serious pretense, but make-believe nevertheless: theater.

George slammed and double-locked the door (the gunman had run down the stairs) and called the police, his voice somehow movie-dramatic: "Officer, there's been a shooting here!" His girlfriend, Joyce, stood in the living room with her shoulders hunched and both hands over her mouth, flanked by six horrified-looking people I had never seen, probably friends of hers. Now George was flushing our grass down the toilet.

My trousers felt too tight. I opened my belt, my fly, tried to pull down the pants a little. And then I remembered a dream. I had written it down at least three weeks ago: *A man steps out of a car and is shot in the stomach by a man who is hiding behind another car. He bends over and falls to his knees and puts his forehead and hands on the ground, like a Muslim praying toward Mecca.* I was amazed and delighted. I imagined writing a letter to the Society for Psychic Research: a documented case of precognition! But what if I died? Ridiculous—that was not in the cards at all. *How did I know?*

For a few seconds I felt myself almost literally at a threshold, all my memories on one side and a darkly luminous space on the other—like two rooms, one filled with furniture and another empty—and joy running back and forth, crazy with glee, like a puppy racing from room to room when its master comes home. I felt an uncontainable, inexpressible happiness, but strangely as if it were not quite my own, as if something closer to me than anything I called myself had woken from endless sleep. A little later I heard a snarling voice in the back of my head distinctly pronouncing three words: "You disgust me," and the next thing I knew a fist was pounding on the door and the police were there, they had come with astonishing promptness—two, three, five, seven men, more and more. They swarmed into every corner of every room and questioned everyone—me too: "Who shot you? What did he look like? Colored, was he colored? How many were there?"

Several of them occupied themselves with staring at George's Cuban posters and searching for drugs—under radiators, inside drawers, under the rug. Conrad crouched down next to me

*I just stood  
there amazed;  
and then I  
realized that  
unless I felt he  
would shoot  
me again*

*A middle-aged,  
bullish cop  
questioned him:  
'It was political,  
right?'*

and placed a tender, consoling hand on my knee. "Are you all right?" I assured him I was. He looked sad. "I really am all right," I said, and I was sure I was telling the truth. This certainty, in the face of what had just happened, struck me as comical. Had I ever known myself safer and sounder than now, sprawled on the kitchen floor surrounded by friends and strangers with my trousers unbuttoned and blood trickling onto my underpants from one of two holes in my gut?

A middle-aged, bullish cop tapped Conrad on the shoulder, ordered him to stand up, maneuvered him into the living room, and questioned him: "It was political, right? Why don't you admit it." Meanwhile, I was bleeding. I was quite feeble by now. At last a young cop was assigned to dress my wounds. He opened a Red Cross kit and wrapped an elastic bandage around my waist (without cleaning the wounds, I noticed). I could tell by his questions that he wanted to know what it was like to get shot: Was it a stinging or a burning sensation, was it bad or not so bad? He also was concerned not to hurt me as he bandaged me. Another cop questioned the neighbors in the hallway. I heard loud protestations: "I sleep! I don't hear nahsink!" Finally the ambulance came with wailing sirens. Two men dressed in white came in and tried to lift me onto a stretcher. It hurt too much. I asked them to help me walk downstairs, and surprisingly, they didn't object. They even let me climb the steps into the back of the ambulance. But when the van pulled up in front of Bellevue Hospital, they insisted on carrying me in. "Can I sit?" I asked. "Lie down." The slightest jolt—a cough, a held breath—cut like a knife.

I lay in a haze. Deep within, submerged but present, was joy, gurgling like distant laughter. At some point I had been asked to undress beneath a sheet. A nurse took off my shoes. Two detectives asked me some questions.

An extremely thin young doctor—probably an intern—sat down beside me on the bed. Before he opened his mouth, I felt myself shrinking away from him.

"What happened." (Phrased not as a question but as a command.)

I couldn't have felt more alert if a snake had slid across my legs. There was no tangible threat in his words or his manner, but what I felt was: This is it. Whether it was his eyes, deep-set behind round glasses framed with black wire, or the way his lips turned down at the corners as if in fine deprecation—everything about him felt subtly yet acutely dangerous.

I told him I had already been asked his question and all the ones that would follow at least half a dozen times, first at home, then here at

the hospital, that I was tired, and couldn't please get my answers from those plainclothes cops or detectives or whatever they were.

At first he looked surprised. Then his eyes narrowed—not hatefully, but as if he was trying to recognize something in my eyes, leaning a little. He smiled briefly. Then he walked away. The smile was unpleasant. He smiled with his lips only.

On my left, where my view was obstructed by a green plastic curtain, a woman was moaning in a steady monotone: "Nurse, nurse, nurse, nurse."

The young intern came back with a legal-sized yellow writing pad and drew a green curtain around my bed. Now we were alone together. He put the pad on the empty bed next to mine. Then he sat down on the edge of my bed and drew back the sheet that covered my body, exposing not only the wounds but my genital area. I suppressed a reflex of anger and fear. What was mistaken about him? He was just doing his job.

"What happened." Again, the voice was flat and flat.

"I was shot."

"Where did it happen."

I don't know why I didn't simply yield and give him the story. Partly it was the difficulty of talking without involuntarily tensing the muscles torn by the bullet. I shook my head and turned my face away. He took my chin in his hand and forced me to look at him. "Sorry, I bother ya, fella!" I reached up to push his hand away—I couldn't, it hurt too much. He smiled up. A flicker of a smile crossed his face. His hand lingered on my chin for a moment, then he let go. I reached down to pull the sheet back up but I couldn't reach it. I tried to sit up but I couldn't. I closed my eyes, trying to recover a sense of deathless security I had felt before.

He put the tip of his finger to the entrance wound on my right side and very lightly circled the rim. Then he ran his finger along the passage the bullet had taken, pressing just a little bit and stopping every inch or so to quietly ask, "Does this hurt? This? This?" Nothing he did caused me more than slight discomfort. His probeings became rougher, so I decided to hurt him with a phony "ouch" or two. That was a mistake: he increased the pressure. Eventually he reached the exit wound. He stopped, drew the sheet up to my chest, picked up the yellow pad and started writing.

He wrote and wrote. I wondered what he could be taking so long to report. Was he lying? I watched him: If he put on fifty pounds, he would be handsome in a featureless sort of way like a shop-window mannequin. Thin blond hair. A small cut on his chin. He filled the



es and half of a third.  
en he left me. I  
ched the IV needle  
se in my left arm, the  
id bubbling in the  
tle above me. The  
tain was briefly  
led aside on my  
nt, and a doctor  
ed me what my reli-  
n was. "None," I  
l.

lay for a while listen-  
to the woman's  
ady moaning on my  
. She had changed  
plea to "Pick me up,  
k me up, pick me up,  
k me up."

Another doctor, a  
tly black man, pulled  
curtain aside and sat  
wn on the edge of my  
l. He smiled, and I  
iled. He asked me  
w I felt, and I said,  
ncomfortable but  
ay." He examined the  
unds, and was very  
eful not to hurt me.

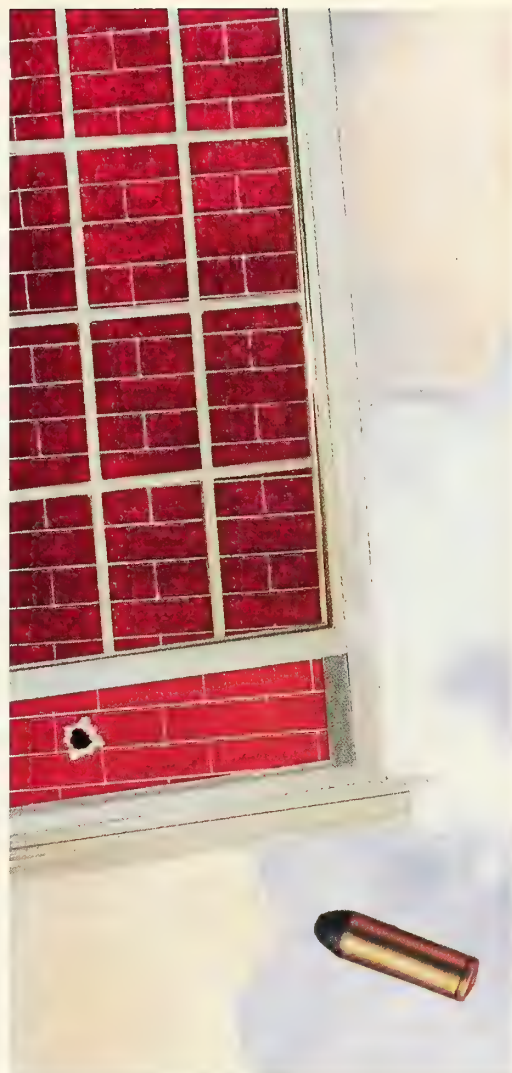
"When did it hap-  
n?" What a sensible  
estion: not what hap-  
ned or where, but  
en! I told him it had  
en around two or  
o-thirty in the morn-  
g. He patted my hand:

think you were very lucky."

I liked him immensely. A nurse came by and  
d: "Dr. Castro, please come to bed seven  
en you have a chance." He said he would be  
ht back, and walked away.

I saw George and Susan standing in the door-  
ty. Someone must have forbidden them to  
ter the room. We waved to each other. Susan  
as mouthing something—"I love you" or  
How are you?" I couldn't be sure—and I raised  
y thumb as an answer. The voice on my left  
pped calling. A few minutes later Dr. Castro  
turned and informed me that an operation was  
ecessary.

"It is a very simple operation, and we have  
rformed it many times. We make an opening  
find out whether you have been injured inter-  
lly, so that if we find a wound we can mend it.  
we don't operate, and you are bleeding by  
ly so much as a scratch in your peritoneum,  
e damage might be beyond repair in a few  
urs. Of course we can't operate without your



consent. But you must  
recognize the necessity  
of it. I repeat, the oper-  
ation is not dangerous  
at all. There is no cause  
for worry. However, if  
we do not operate, the  
chances are that you  
will die within a few  
hours of injuries that  
should be repaired im-  
mediately. So, do you  
consent to this oper-  
ation?"

Of course I consent-  
ed. I trusted him with-  
out reserve. With a  
touch on my knee Dr.  
Castro complimented  
me for my good com-  
mon sense, drew the  
curtain around my bed,  
and left.

I wished he had not  
drawn the curtain. I  
wanted to see Susan and  
George. I wished they  
could come in and talk  
to me. I would ask for  
permission as soon as  
the doctor came back.

Then the skinny in-  
tern parted the curtain  
and stood next to me  
with a clipboard in his  
hand.

"I want you to sign  
here"—marking a line

with a red pen at the bottom of a printed form—  
"for the operation." And he handed me the  
clipboard and the pen.

I suppose he had meant to put an X on the  
line, but it was a cross. I glanced up at his face.  
He sat down on the edge of the bed, drew the  
curtain around his shoulder so that he was  
shielded from the rest of the room, and looked  
at me steadily, blinking from time to time. A  
very peculiar sensation then: that someone was  
gazing at me through his eyes, someone who  
knew me very well and was using this young  
man's face as a mask. I was afraid. I put the tip of  
the ballpoint pen on the paper next to the cross.  
My hand felt cold. I thought of Dr. Castro's  
good arguments. They sounded tinny against  
this threat. Of what? Today I would call it "per-  
dition." But I had no idea, then, of what that  
word means. All I felt was an undefined and  
therefore limitless menace.

"What if I don't sign?"

This question was no longer directed at the

*A very peculiar  
sensation: that  
someone was  
gazing at me  
through his eyes*

What was I thinking before, then, about life and death being indistinguishable?

young man whose job it was to secure my signature; it was addressed to the one gazing at me through his eyes with a glittering merciless intelligence that hated and lured and smiled and lied yet shone with the knowledge of hidden things. He saw through me; I saw only the opaque glint of his understanding.

His answer was to smile down at me, slowly shaking his head as if to say, "You're going to die, and I'm certainly not going to stop you." And I had such a strange impression then: that this bed surrounded by pale green curtains was all the world there was; that everything else was an illusion or else so separate it might as well not have ever existed; that we would not be interrupted by any Dr. Castro, not by George or Susan either; and that He and I were playing a game, a contest of some sort. And that He had nothing to lose, while I was playing for my life.

What kind of game was this? He raised a quizzical eyebrow; that was for me to guess.

"Well?" he said then.

It must be poker, I thought, this is something like poker. But you know my hand as well as yours. And you're bluffing, of course you're bluffing. You're asking me to sign this paper, you're telling me I'll die if I don't. Simple logic tells me that the choice you suggest to me will be the one I'll regret. But you're subtler than this. You want me to *think* that you're bluffing. I don't have to solve your riddles. I have my yes and my no. I have a voice in me that is wiser and truer than all your inveigling. It doesn't promise me life, it is life itself, deathless, immortal life. You want me to betray my own soul. You want me to doubt that I'm well and that all is well. You want me to die.

And then I had doubts again. More than doubts, almost a certainty that all this was pure craziness, this enemy and this dancing ally within, that I was faced with nothing more than an obnoxious intern who would probably play no part in the simple and necessary operation that had been recommended by Dr. Castro, and that I should put an end to this nonsense and sign my name next to that slightly lopsided X and be done with it.

I said: "I think I'd like to wait with the operation."

"No operation then?" Mocking blue eyes.

It took a great effort to talk, especially since I believed he knew, and he knew that I knew that he knew: "No, that's not what I said. I said I'd like to wait. I'm feeling fine now, I'm pretty sure there's nothing wrong with me, I don't know why, I'd just like to wait a few hours. If my condition deteriorates, of course I'll..."

He snorted, shrugged, and left.

Dr. Castro returned, looked at me sternly, and said with annoyance: "What's this I hear?"

He shook his head. "I thought you were reasonable!" I didn't know what to say. "Why did you change your mind? Are you frightened?"

I told him I wasn't. He didn't believe me. He said I wanted to wait for signs of definite danger. He was quite annoyed. "You are not a doctor," he said. "Do you really think you can decide what is good for you in your state and what is not? It is not necessary for you to feel pain even if you are lethally wounded. You might lie here comfortably for a few hours while your intestines fill with blood, until one suddenly bursts. Don't you understand?"

At that moment the loudspeaker interrupted him: "Dr. Castro, Dr. Castro, please come to Intensive Care," and a rasping voice came from a neighboring bed: "*Focken communist!*" He laughed, wincing with pain. Dr. Castro shot me a furious glance as he left my bed in a hurry, and I realized that he had swayed me with the authority of his manner and not with his arguments. I would not sign for the operation; everything would be all right. I knew it. I knew that I knew it and if I had been able to shout it I would have shouted for joy.

George and Susan came to my bedside. They had seen by the doctor's face that something was wrong. A nurse told them they couldn't stay there; they nodded, but ignored her. I told them what I had decided. George looked sick. I made a few attempts to change my mind; he then said that if I died it would take him a long time to forgive me. I said I was sorry this was upsetting him but everything would be okay as soon as I was up and walking we could celebrate. All the while I could feel Susan's hand in my hand, and her other hand stroking my hair. My eyes filled with tears. She dried them with her fingertips. She was crying, too.

"What if you're wrong?" she said.

"I will still be okay." What an amazing thought: Life and death, being and not being, the same—could that be? "But I'm not wrong. I've never been more certain of anything in my life." And she believed me. Somehow that seemed stranger and more wonderful than my own assurance. Susan was holding my hand, and I thought: If she dies before there will be no one whose hand pours such sweetness into my body and I'll be poorer than the poorest derelict because I'll know what treasure I've lost. What was I thinking before, then, about life and death being indistinguishable?

After signing myself out, I got dressed. Susan tied my shoes while George called for a taxi. I managed to walk without great discomfort. I felt dizzy, though.

George took the subway home, and Susan



I took a cab to her place uptown. In the elevator mirror, I looked to myself like Cantinflas, Mexican comedian—my pants hanging around the waist, the trouser legs covering greater part of my shoes. The elevator man didn't seem to notice. We opened the apartment door quietly, so as not to wake up Susan's roommate, Myrna. I went right to bed. Before going to sleep, I saw a hypnagogic image of a child drawing a slender red ribbon in a single, delicate stitch through my body and out a window into space.

When I awoke early that same morning, Susan was already up. She came into the room to find Myrna, and Myrna told me she had woken from a dream in which I had been sentenced to death by hanging. At the crucial moment the executioner tore and I was pardoned and packed off to bed in Susan's room, exhausted but healthy, and Susan went to Myrna to ask for her aspirin for me.

Around 9 A.M., George came with a doctor. The doctor examined the wounds and said, "If you're not dead by now, you're okay, but you are very foolish, refusing to authorize that operation; it's a miracle, really. Look: the bullet passed through the skin and fatty tissues, probably ripping some of the musculature, but missing by what must be a fraction of an inch the lungs, the heart, the intestines, the kidneys, the testicles and the stomach. I congratulate you on your good fortune, but not on your good sense." I suddenly felt certain that I would have died on the operating table if I had signed that waiver.

I slept the rest of the day. In the evening, I took a bath. Susan, changing the sheets, found a few peas I had spilled while eating, and Myrna suggested they must have rolled out through the intestines in my stomach. The crisis seemed to be over.

I called my brother the next morning and told him what had happened. He was in Vermont, visiting his high-school English teacher. Twenty minutes later he called me back. He had told the teacher's wife about me at breakfast, and she was very surprised, because she had just woken from a dream in which a man was shot in the stomach and survived and told everyone it was actually painless—"only a jolt."

George came by wearing an ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ button with a little noose attached to the bottom. He brought me my journal, the notebook in which I recorded my dreams, and an envelope addressed to me that had arrived the day before. I opened it. It was a three-page advertisement for a new California publication called *Borderline*. On the cover was a large picture of a black coffin with an open lid. The inside of the coffin was red, and a heavy black question mark was painted on this red surface.

A caption in boldfaced capitals beneath the picture read: "Do you know the day you will die?" I had never heard of *Borderline*. They must have gotten my name from a mailing list.

I spent most of the day in bed writing down everything I remembered. In the notebook, I discovered four dreams that had anticipated the shooting. The first was the one about the man who was shot and ended up in a Muslim prayer position. The second dream was about three weeks old: "Susan points out to me that I have three navels. I look and am amazed to find that I actually have two extra navels, one to the right and one to the left of the one I was born with." (There followed a confident interpretation along Oedipal lines.) The third dream was dated February 16, eleven days before I was shot: "An airplane makes an emergency landing on a two-lane highway lined with trees. The plane is running fairly fast but slowing down. There are three men in the cockpit: the middle-aged pilot who has expertly carried out the forced landing; a younger co-pilot sitting to his right; and a third, very young man who sits between them, even though there is hardly any room (he seems virtually bodyless), and who seems to be on his virgin flight. A very large black truck comes rushing toward the plane at great speed. A collision seems inevitable. But the truck passes under the left wing, missing it by a fraction of an inch. The plane stops. Then it turns out that the pilot has been shot, probably from the passing truck. Clutching his stomach, he exchanges seats with the co-pilot. 'I'm all right,' he says. 'Just get us out of here.' The plane begins to turn. At first it seems impossible to maneuver it, slalom-like, through the trees and across the plowed fields on both sides of the road, but the co-pilot succeeds. Now the plane has reversed its direction. The road ahead is clear. The youngest of the three men is feeling a subtle and growing ecstasy." The fourth dream was the one I have already described about Death coming to an old man and saying, "We make the rounds three times a day."

That evening, I found myself with Susan and George watching an Off-Broadway production of a Brecht play about *three pilots* who survive the crash of their plane and discuss their situation among a chorus of invisible spirits.

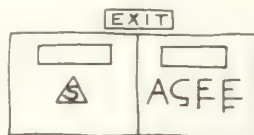
**T**he next day, Tuesday, I went back home to Tenth Street. George showed me where the bullet had struck the brick wall opposite the kitchen window, which was still raised about an inch off the sill, as it had been on the night I was shot. Conrad came over in the evening with a gift of half an ounce of grass.

Wednesday, Conrad and I took the bus to

*George came by wearing an 'All the Way With LBJ' button with a little noose attached to the bottom*

*It was  
too much.  
Whatever was  
doing these  
things was  
overdoing them*

Bellevue to pick up some money and papers I had left there. We got out of the bus at the wrong stop and approached the building from the back, opposite the side where I had been carried in by the ambulance men. There was a large door marked EXIT. We decided to go in and ask someone how to get to the emergency ward. As we approached the door, I stopped in my tracks. There, before us, drawn in yellow chalk, was the following:



"That's my name," I said, pointing at the right-hand side of the door. Conrad stopped, shook his head vehemently, and said: "No—no, no, man—no, it can't be..." He looked frightened. "It's just a coincidence," he said. He pointed out that the G wasn't really a G and the E's weren't regular E's either. I asked him what else the word could be read to mean—and it was a word, wasn't it?

"Maybe a kid wrote it," he said.

"My name? Do you know how many Ages there are in New York outside my own family?" He shook his head. "I've checked the phone directory: two."

Some people came out of the door and stared at us as they passed. We must have looked strangely excited.

We went inside and asked a nurse where I could find my belongings. She referred me to the Property Office. There I was told I would have to get the signature of someone in the emergency ward and should go to room so-and-so. I knocked on that door. There was no answer. I opened the door and stepped in; Conrad followed behind me. There, surrounded by several waiting patients, was Dr. Castro, with his back to me, filling out some forms. He turned, came walking in my direction, his head bowed, looking down at the papers in his hand. He walked right up to me without looking up, raised his head, and saw me. His eyes widened for a moment, and his mouth opened too.

He closed his mouth, still staring at me, but without giving any sign of greeting or even of recognition. I returned his gaze for several seconds. "You might not remember me," I said then. "I was here on the morning of February 27 with a gunshot wound. I've come back to pick up my property. I need someone's signature. Perhaps you can help me..."

He lowered his eyes, considering my request. "No," he said then, looking at me again, with a quizzical, suspicious look in his eyes, "I don't think I can help you. I know nothing about

this." I was puzzled. Was he afraid? Was he astonished to see me alive?

"Perhaps you could tell someone else to get me the signature?"

"No, I can't do that. I know nothing about these procedures." He was staring again. I stared back.

"I have to get the stuff sometime," I said, "and I do need the signature of someone in the ward. It might as well be you."

Some more staring. He shrugged. "We're very busy here." And impatiently waving papers in his hand, he walked up to a patient who was lying on his stomach on a stretcher and took him by the arm: "Hey! Hey! Are you with us?"

The man stirred. Dr. Castro left the room, closing the door and leaving me behind with patients and a nurse who was sitting at the desk rhythmically pounding a stamp over and over onto identical pieces of printed paper that I pulled off a stack in front of her. I waited a few minutes, since some of the patients needed attention more urgently than I did. But she went right on pounding, and eventually I asked her if she would sign the slip of paper I had brought. "Certainly," she said, and signed.

I picked up my belongings at the Property Office. Everything was there except the card reading REVERSE OR EXCHANGE. It struck me then that those curious little extrusions at the bottom of the letters on the hospital door were the beginnings of a mirror image.



That the hook on the G, in fact, had reversed to normal position and seemed about to produce the curved back of an upside-down G; that the triangle was the letter I had turned into a snake on the acid trip; two snakes, in fact, if they were reverse images of each other; and that in the airplane dream, too, there was the theme of reversal, the plane reversing direction when the pilot was shot. But what did "exchange" mean?

We left by the rear exit to look at the graffiti on the door again. Conrad said: "It is my name." Then he told me that on the night of the shot he had seen my first name written on the wall of the hallway outside my apartment. When he said that I felt nauseous. It was too much. Whatever was doing these things was overdoing them.

Sure enough, when we got home, there was JOEL written in blue magic marker on the wall among dozens of other names and signatures. It might have been there for a while without



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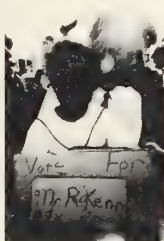
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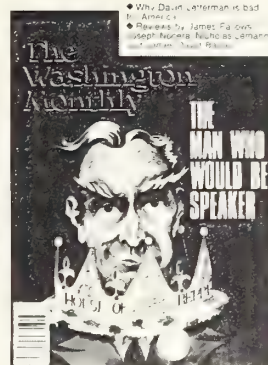
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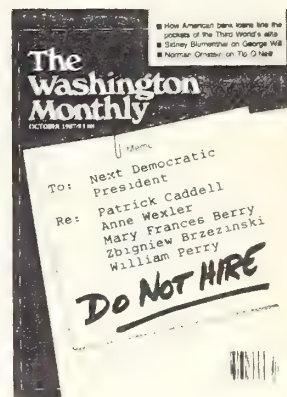
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*I had to suppose  
something  
unknown was  
the maker of  
this mystery,  
and I was the  
central figure*

noticing it. Nothing occult about it. I shrugged and felt relieved. We went inside. Susan was there, and George, and George's girlfriend. We smoked some of the good grass Conrad had brought, and talked about what had happened. No one else had noticed my name on the wall either, but so what—the walls were covered with graffiti and the hallway was dark. Finally we decided to go to a movie. I was the last to leave the apartment. As I turned the key in the lock, I noticed on the door an X about the size of my hand. It was drawn with yellow chalk, just like my name on the hospital door. It couldn't have been there when I came home, I would have noticed. Who put it there? Conrad? I felt nauseous again. "I've had enough," I said. "Please stop." The others were already going down the stairs. I caught up with them. I didn't tell them about the X on the door.

That night I woke up in fear. I was thinking of Conrad. It was because of him that I'd taken the acid. Hadn't he tricked me into it? The next time I had seen him was the night I was shot. What if he knew the two strangers who followed us up the stairs? What if he had set up the whole thing? He had seen me draw the double S when we were on acid, and he was with me when I discovered the S in the triangle and the letters of my name on the hospital door. He must have put them there in the first place. And the yellow X on my door. But that was as far as my suspicion could reach. What about the path of the bullet, through my body and out the window, and my surviving it: Who arranged that? What made those bells ring at the moment when I stood in front of that little gray card, and what impelled me to pick it up? What made the bum sit down in the shit after I said he would? Who sent the dreams that prefigured the shooting? What intelligence governed the fall of three coins so that a randomly selected line in a book would answer my questions not just coherently but truthfully? Who arranged for the lights to go off on the Empire State Building right after Conrad established it as an "angel of light" and the Con Ed plant as its sinister opposite, as if to insinuate the suggestion that Evil was the beginning and end of what power and glory Good claimed as its own? Unless I presumed Conrad to have the powers of a demiurge, which would be crazy, or attributed all these events and their linked meanings to an avalanche of accidents, which was unreasonable; unless I dismissed the secret delight that guided me past the counsel of logic and doctorly reason, I had to suppose that something unknown yet profoundly close to me was the maker of this puzzle, this dramatic mystery in which, for reasons I could not begin to guess, I was the central figure. And as I thought this, my fear subsided and I became still, and a

strange, arcane vision rose up in me. It looked like a medieval tapestry representing a labyrinth with a unicorn and several human figures, all of them were myself. I was the sacred master at the heart of the maze, and also the hunter sent out to catch him, and the maiden chosen to be his bride. There were two or three other figures, but I forgot them. It felt like a momentous revelation, yet it came and went in a few seconds and almost without excitement. I wrote it down and went to sleep.

The next morning I went with Susan to photograph the inscription at Bellevue. If I wrote about all this strangeness, pictures would help make it believable. Breton had included photographs in *Nadja*—each one of them evidence, if not proof, that the "fury of symbols" was as real as a woman's glove or a wasp-waist statue on the Place Maubert.

It was raining; the chalk was beginning to wash away. I showed Susan how to operate Myrna's camera and stood myself at the center between the two wings of the door, on my right the triangle with the S in it, on my left the partially inverted letters of my name. I thought I would make a good picture.

Later, in her apartment, Susan took more pictures of me with my shirt off. That was to document the "three navels."

I couldn't sleep that night. Susan suggested I go to a psychologist. I didn't like the idea. Maybe a sedative would calm these phenomena along with my nerves. Maybe Conrad would be able to get me some.

I consulted the *I Ching*. It said:

Use no medicine in an illness  
Incurred through no fault of your own.  
It will pass of itself.

That is what happened. The wave of coincidences subsided. The last two involved the photographs. It turned out that after taking the picture of me in the doorway of the hospital Susan had forgotten to advance the film and had superimposed an accidental picture of a wide jet of steam shooting out of a damaged pipe by the side of a building with a triangular danger sign next to it. She must have released the shutter without noticing. My name on the door was completely obliterated by the white steam. The triangle with the S was nearly invisible. The DANGER sign stood at a slant, in sharp focus, pointing like an arrow at my groin. Above my head was the EXIT sign.

The two pictures she took of me in her apartment were also superimposed. The result resembled photos taken during séances—a ghost double, naked, rising out of my naked torso, the gunshot wounds faintly visible in both bodies.



# PEACE OF MIND

By T. Coraghessan Boyle

First she told them the story of the family surprised over their corn muffins by the masked intruder. "He was a black man," she said, dropping her voice and at the same time allowing a hint of tremolo to creep into it, "and he was wearing a lifelike mask of President Reagan. He just jimmied the lock and waltzed in the front door with the morning paper as if he was delivering flowers or something . . . they thought it was a joke at first." Giselle's voice became hushed now, confidential, as she described how he'd brutalized the children, humiliated the wife—"sexually, if you know what I mean"—bound them all to the kitchen chairs with twists of sheer pantyhose. Worse, she said, he dug a scratchy old copy of Sam & Dave's "Soul Man" out of the record collection and made them listen to it over and over as he looted the house. They knew he was finished when Sam & Dave choked off, the stereo rudely torn from the socket and thrown in with the rest of their things—she paused here to draw a calculated breath—"And at 7:30 A.M., no less."

She had them, she could see it in the way the pretty little wife's eyes went dark with hate and the balding husband clutched fitfully at his pockets—she had them, but she poured it on anyway, flexing her verbal muscles, not yet noon and a sale, a big sale, already in the bag. So she gave them an abbreviated version of the story of the elderly lady and the overworked

Mexican from the knife-sharpening service and wrung some hideous new truths from the tale of the housewife who came home to find a strange car in her garage. "A strange car?" the husband prompted, after she'd paused to level a doleful, frightened look at the wife. Giselle sighed. "Two white men met her at the door. They were in their early forties, nicely dressed, polite—she thought they were real estate people or something. They escorted her into the house, bundled up the rugs, the paintings, the camcorder and VCR, and then took turns desecrating"—that was the term she used, it got them every time—"desecrating her naked body with the cigarette lighter from her very own car."

The husband and wife exchanged a glance, then signed on for the whole schmear: five thousand and some-odd dollars for the alarm system—every window, door, keyhole, and crevice wired—and sixty bucks a month for a pair of "Armed Response" signs to stick in the lawn. Giselle slid into the front seat of the Mercedes and cranked up the salsa music that made her feel as if every day was a fiesta, and then let out a long slow breath. She checked her watch and drew a circle around the next name on her list. It was a few minutes past twelve, crime was rampant, and she was feeling lucky. She tapped her foot and whistled along with the sour, jostling trumpets—no doubt about it, she'd have another sale before lunch.

The balding husband stood at the window and watched the Mercedes back out of the driveway, drift into gear, and glide soundlessly up the street. It took him a moment before he

*T. Coraghessan Boyle's third collection of short stories, If the River Was Whiskey, will be published this spring by Viking. His story "Sorry Fugu" appeared in the October 1987 issue of Harper's Magazine.*

realized he was still clutching his checkbook. "God, Hil," he said (or rather croaked—something seemed to be wrong with his throat), "it's a lot of money."

The pretty little wife, Hilary, crouched frozen on the couch, legs drawn up to her chest, feet bare, toenails glistening. "They stuff your un-

lighter. I heard they burn their initials in you."

Yes, of course they did, he thought—wouldn't they? They sold crack in the elementary schools, pissed in the alleys, battered women for their social security checks. They cleaned out Denny Davidson while he was

the Bahamas and ripped the stereo out of Phy Steubig's Peugeot. And just last week they'd stolen two brand-new Ironcast aluminum garbage cans from the curb in front of the neighbor's house—just dumped the trash in the street and drove off with them. "What do you think, Hil?" he asked. "We can still get out of it."

"I don't care what it costs," she murmured, her voice drained of emotion. "I won't be able to sleep till it's in the ground."

Ellis crossed the road to gaze out on the sun-dappled backyard. Marty and Corinne were on the swings, pumping hard, lifting up into the sky and falling back again with a pure rhythmic grace that was suddenly so poignant he could feel a sob rising in his throat. "I won't let anything happen to her," he said, turning his wife and spreading

his hands as if in supplication. "We've got to have it."

"Yes," she said.

"If only for our peace of mind."

Giselle was pretty good with directions she had to be, in her business—but still she had to pull over three times to consult her street guide before she found the next address on her list. The house was in a seedy, run-down neighborhood of blasted trees, gutted cars, and tacky little houses, the kind of neighborhood that just made her blood boil. How could people live like that? she wondered, flicking off the tape in disgust. Didn't they have any self-respect? She hit the accelerator, scattering a pack of snarling hyena-like dogs, dodged a stained mattress and a pair of overturned trash cans, and swung into the driveway of a house that looked as if it had

derwear in your mouth," she whispered; "that's the worst thing. Can you imagine that, I mean the taste of it—your own underwear?"

Ellis didn't answer. He was thinking of the masked intruder—that maniac disguised as the President—and of his own children, whose heedless squeals of joy came to him like hosannas from the swing set out back. He'd been a fool, he saw that now. How could he have thought, even for a minute, that they'd be safe out here in the suburbs? The world was violent, rotten, corrupt, seething with hatred and perversion, and there was no escaping it. Everything you worked for, everything you loved, had to be locked up as if you were in a castle under siege.

"I wonder what they did to her," Hilary said.

"Who?"

"That woman—the one with the cigarette





... bombed, partially reconstructed, and then  
bed again. There has to be some mistake,  
thought. She glanced up and caught the eye  
man sitting on the porch next door. He was  
nd shirtless, his chest and arms emblazoned  
lurid tattoos, and he was lifting a beer can  
is lips when he saw that she was peering at  
from behind the frosted window of her car.  
vly, as if it cost him an enormous effort, he  
ered the beer can and raised the middle fin-  
of his free hand.

he rechecked her list—7718 Picador Drive.  
re was no number on the house in front of  
but the house to the left was 7716 and the  
to the right 7720. This was it, all right. She  
oped out of the car with her briefcase,  
ured her shoulders, and slammed the door,  
he while wondering what in god's name the  
er of a place like this would want with an  
m system. These were the sort of people who  
ce into houses—and here she turned to give  
fat man an icy glare—not the ones who had  
thing to protect. But then what did she care?  
ale was a sale. She set the car alarm with a  
ce snap of her wrist, waited for the reassuring  
t of response from the bowels of the car, and  
ched up the walk.

The man who answered the door was tall  
stooped—mid-fifties, she guessed—and he  
ked like a scholar in his wire-rims and dingy  
digan with leather elbow patches. His hair  
the color of freshly turned dirt and his  
s—slightly distorted and swimming behind  
thick lenses—were as blue as the skies over  
lahoma. “Mr. Coles?” she said.

He looked her up and down, taking his time.  
nd what’re you supposed to be,” he breathed  
a wheezy humorless drawl, “the Avon lady or  
nothing?” It was then that she noticed the  
vous little woman frozen in the shadows of  
hallway behind him. “Everett,” the woman  
d in a soft, pleading tone, but the man took  
notice of her. “Or don’t tell me,” he said,  
ou’re selling Girl Scout cookies, right?”

When it came to sales, Giselle was unshak-  
e. She saw her opening and thrust out her  
d. “Giselle Nyerges,” she said, “I’m from  
ureCo. You contacted us about a home secu-  
y system.”

The woman vanished. The fat man next door  
w into his fist, producing a rude noise, and  
erett Coles, with a grin that showed too  
ch gum, took her hand and led her into the  
use.

Inside, the place wasn’t as bad as she’d ex-  
cted. K Mart taste, of course, furniture made  
particleboard, hopelessly tacky bric-a-brac,  
edlepoint homilies on the walls, but at least it  
s spare. And clean. The man led her through  
e living room to the open-beam kitchen and

threw himself down in a chair at the formica ta-  
ble. A sliding glass door gave onto the dusty ex-  
panse of the backyard. “So,” he said. “Let’s hear  
it.”

“First I want to tell you how happy I am that  
you’re considering a SecureCo home security  
system, Mr. Coles,” she said, sitting opposite  
him and throwing the latches on her briefcase  
with a professional snap. “I don’t know if you  
heard about it,” she said, the conspiratorial  
whisper creeping into her voice, “but just last  
week they found a couple—both retirees, on a  
fixed income—bludgeoned to death in their  
home not three blocks from here. And they’d  
been security-conscious too—dead bolts on the  
doors and safety locks on the windows. The kill-  
er was this black man—a Negro—and he was  
wearing a lifelike mask of President Reagan  
... well, he found this croquet mallet...”

She faltered. The man was looking at her in  
the oddest way. He was grinning—grinning as if  
she were telling a joke—and there was some-  
thing wrong with his eyes. They seemed to be  
jerking back and forth in the sockets, jittering  
like the shiny little balls in a pinball machine.  
“I know it’s not a pleasant story, Mr. Coles,”  
she said, “but I like my customers to know that,  
that...” Those eyes were driving her crazy.  
She looked down, shuffling through the papers  
in her briefcase.

“They crowd you,” he said.

“Pardon?” she said, looking up again.

“Sons of bitches,” he growled, “they crowd  
you.”

She found herself gazing over his shoulder at  
the neat little needlepoint display on the kitch-  
en wall: SEMPER FIDELIS; HOME SWEET HOME;  
BURN, BABY, BURN.

“You like?” he asked.

Burn, Baby, Burn?

“Did them myself.” He dropped the grin and  
gazed out on nothing. “Got a lot of time on my  
hands.”

She felt herself slipping. This wasn’t the way  
it was supposed to go at all. She was wondering  
if she should hit him with another horror story  
or get down to inspecting the house and writing  
up an estimate, when he asked if she wanted a  
drink. “Thank you, no,” she said. And then,  
with a smile, “It’s a bit early in the day for me.”

He said nothing, just looked at her with those  
jumpy blue eyes till she had to turn away.  
“Shit,” he spat suddenly, “come down off  
your high horse, lady, let your hair down,  
loosen up.”

She cleared her throat. “Yes, well, shouldn’t  
we have a look around so I can assess your  
needs?”

“Gin,” he said, and his voice was flat and  
calm again, “it’s the elixir of life.” He made no

move to get up from the table. "You're a good-looking woman, you know that?"

"Thank you," she said in her smallest voice. "Shouldn't we—?"

"Got them high heels and pretty little ankles, nice earrings, hair all done up, and that smart little tweed suit—of course you know you're a good-looking woman. Bet it don't hurt the sales a bit, huh?"

She couldn't help herself now. All she wanted was to get up from the table and away from those jittery eyes, sale or no sale. "Listen," she said, "listen to me. There was this woman and she came home and there was this strange car in her garage—"

"No," he said, "you listen to me."

"**P**anty Rapist Escapes," Hilary read aloud in a clear declamatory tone, setting down her coffee mug and spreading out the Metro section as if it were a sacred text. "'Norbert Baptiste, 27, of Silverlake, dubbed the Panty Rapist because he gagged his victims with their own underthings. . .'" She broke off to give her husband a look of muted triumph. "You see," she said, lifting the coffee mug to her lips, "I told you. *With their own underthings.*"

Ellis was puzzling over the box scores of the previous night's ball games, secure as a snail in its shell. It was early Saturday morning, Mifty and Corinne were in the den watching cartoons, and the house alarm was still set from the night before. In a while, after he'd finished his muesli and his second cup of coffee, he'd punch in the code and disarm the thing and then maybe do a little gardening and afterward take the girls to the park. He wasn't really listening, and he murmured a halfhearted reply.

"And can you imagine Tina Carfarct trying to tell me we were just wasting our money on the alarm system?" She pinched her voice in mockery: "'I hate to tell you, Hil, but this is the safest neighborhood in L.A.' Jesus, she's like a Pollyanna or something, but you know what it is, don't you?"

Ellis looked up from the paper.

"They're too cheap, that's what—her and Sid both. They're going to take their chances, hope it happens to the next guy, and all to save a few thousand dollars. It's sick. It really is."

"You won't get any argument from me," Ellis said, shaking his head till he could feel the morning looseness in his jowls.

The night before last they'd had the Carfarcts and their twelve-year-old boy, Brewster, over for dinner—a nice sole amandine and scalloped potatoes Ellis had whipped up himself—and the chief topic of conversation was, of course, the new alarm system. "I don't know," Sid had said (Sid was forty, handsome as a prince, an invest-

ment counselor who'd once taught high school social studies), "it's kind of like being a prisoner in your own home."

"All that money," Tina chimed in, such as it was at the cherry of her second Manhattan mean, I don't think I could stand it. Like she says, I'd feel like I was a prisoner or something, afraid to step out into my own yard because some phantom mugger might be lurking in the marigolds."

"The guy in the Reagan mask was no phantom," Hilary said, leaning across the table and slashing the air with the flat of her hand, braced at an angle. "Or those two men—white men—who accosted that woman in her own garage. She was so wrought up she couldn't go on. She turned to her husband, tears welling in her eyes. 'Go on, El,' she said, 'tell them.'"

It was then that Tina made her "safest neighborhood in L.A." remark and Sid, draining his glass and setting it down carefully on the table, said in a phlegmy, ruminative voice, "I don't know, it's like you've got no faith in your fellow man," to which Ellis snapped, "Don't be naïf, Sid."

Even Tina scored him for that one. "Come off it, Sid," she said, giving him a side look.

"Let's face it," Ellis said, "it's a society of haves and have-nots, and like it or not, we're the haves."

"I don't deny there's a lot of crazies out there, and all," Tina went on, swiveling to face Ellis. "It's just that the whole idea of having an alarm on everything—I mean you can't park your car at the mall without one—is just, well, it's a silly thing. I mean next thing you know people'll be wearing body alarms to work—rub up against them in a crowd and bingo! lights flash and sirens go off." She sat back, pleased with herself, a tiny, elegant blonde in a low-cut cocktail dress and a smug grin, untouched, unafraid, a woman without a care in the world.

But then Sid wanted to see the thing and four of them went to the front door and gathered round the glowing black plastic panel as if it were some rare jewel, some treasure built into the wall. Ellis opened the closet to show them the big metal box that contained the system—"brain," as the SecureCo woman had called it—and Sid, taken by the allure of the thing, lightly touched the tip of his index finger to the neon glowing red strip at the bottom that read EMERGENCY.

Instantly, the scene was transformed. Whereas a moment earlier they'd been calm, civilized people having a drink before a calm, civilized meal, they were suddenly transformed into hand-wringing zombies, helpless in the face of the technology that assaulted them. For Sid had



ted the alarm, and no one, least of all El-  
view what to do about it. The EMERGENCY  
was flashing wildly, the alarm beep-beep-  
ing, the girls and the Carfarcts' boy fleeing  
V room in confusion, four pairs of hands  
ring helplessly over the box, and Ellis try-  
dredge up the disarm code from the un-  
n pocket of memory in which it was  
1. "One-two-two-one!" Hilary shouted.  
was holding her ears and making a face.  
oked abashed.

nen at last—after two false starts—Ellis  
eded in disarming the thing and they set-  
back with their drinks and exclamations of  
!" and "I thought I was going to die,"  
was a knock at the door. It was a man in a  
eCo uniform, with nightstick and gun. He  
all and he had a mustache. He invited him-  
a. "There a problem?" he asked.

o, no," Ellis said, standing in the en-  
away, heart pounding, acutely aware of his  
s' eyes on him, "it's a new system and we,  
it was a mistake."  
ame?" the man said.  
unsicker. Ellis."  
ode word?"

re Ellis faltered. The code word, to be used  
urposes of positive identification in just  
a situation as this, was Hilary's inspiration.  
something easy to remember, the Secure-  
oman had said, and Hilary had chosen the  
e of the kids' pet rabbit, Honey Bunny. Ellis  
dn't say the words. Not in front of this hu-  
ess man in the mustache, not with Sid and  
watching him with those tight mocking  
es on their lips...

Code word?" the man repeated.

ilary was sunk into the couch at the far end  
ne coffee table. She leaned forward and  
d her hand like a child in class, waving it to  
n the guard's attention. "Honey Bunny,"  
said in a gasp that made the hair prickle at  
back of Ellis's neck, "it's Honey Bunny."  
hat had been two nights ago.

ut now, in the clear light of Saturday morn-  
after sleeping the sleep of the just—and  
lent (Panty Rapist—all the Panty Rapists in  
world could escape and it was nothing to  
)—feeling self-satisfied and content right  
down to the felt lining of his slippers, Ellis  
back, stretched, and gave his wife a rich lit-  
mile. "I guess it's a matter of priorities, hon-  
he said. "Sid and Tina can think what they  
want, but you know what I say—bet-  
ter safe than sorry."

When she talked about it afterward—with  
husband at Gennaro's that night (she was  
upset to cook), with her sister, with Betty  
ger on the telephone—Giselle said she'd

never been so scared in all her life. She meant it  
too. This was no horror story clipped from the  
newspaper, this was real. And it happened to  
her.

The guy was crazy. Creepy. Sick. He'd kept  
her there over four hours, and he had no inten-  
tion of buying anything—she could see that in  
the first fifteen minutes. He just wanted an au-  
dience. Somebody to rant at, to threaten, to pin  
down with those jittery blue eyes. Richard had  
wanted her to go to the police, but she balked.  
What had he done, really? Scared her, yes.  
Bruised her arm. But what could the police  
do?—she'd gone there of her own free will.

Her own free will. He'd said that. Those were  
his exact words.

Indignant, maybe a little shaken, she'd got-  
ten up from the kitchen table to stuff her papers  
back into the briefcase. He was cursing under  
his breath, muttering darkly about the idiots on  
the freeway in their big-ass Mercedes, crowding  
him, about spics and niggers and junior high  
kids cutting through his yard—"Free country,  
my ass!" he'd shouted suddenly. "Free for every  
punk and weirdo and greaser to crap all over  
what little bit I got left, but let me get up from  
this table and put a couple holes in one of the  
little pecker-heads and we'll see how free it is.  
And I suppose you're going to protect me, huh,  
Miss Mercedes-Benz with your heels and stock-  
ings and your big high-tech alarm system, huh?"

When she snapped the briefcase closed—no  
sale, nothing, just get me out of here, she was  
thinking—that was when he grabbed her arm.  
"Sit down," he snarled, and she tried to shake  
free but couldn't, he was strong with the rage of  
the psychopath, the lion in its den, the loony up  
against the wall.

"You're hurting me," she said as he forced her  
back down. "Mr. . . . Coles!" and she heard her  
own voice jump with anger, fright, pain.

"Yeah, that's right," he said, tightening his  
grip, "but you came here of your own free will,  
didn't you? Thought you were going to sucker  
me, huh? Run me a song and dance and lay your  
high-tech crap and your big bad SecureCo  
guards on me—oh, I've seen them, bunch of tit-  
suckers and college wimps, who they going to  
stop? Huh?" He dropped her arm and chal-  
lenged her with his jumpy mad tight-jawed  
glare.

She tried to get up, but he roared, "Sit down!  
We got business here, goddamnit!" And then  
he was calling for his wife: "Glenys! Woman!  
Get your ass in here."

If she'd expected anything from the wife, any  
help or melioration, Giselle could see at a  
glance just how hopeless it was. The woman  
wouldn't look at her. She appeared in the door-  
way, pale as death, her hands trembling, staring

at the carpet like a whipped dog. "Two G & Ts," Coles said, sucking in his breath as if he were on the very edge of something, at the very beginning, "tall, with a wedge of lime."

"But—" Giselle began to protest, looking from Coles to the woman.

"You'll drink with me, all right." Coles's voice came back at her like a blade of ice. "Get friendly, huh? Show me what you got." And then he turned away, his face violent with disgust. "SecureCo," he spat. He looked up, staring past her. "You going to keep the sons of bitches away from me, you going to keep them off my back, you going to give me any guarantees?" His voice rose. "I got a gun collection worth \$12,000 in there—you going to answer for that? For my color TV? The goddamned trash can even?"

Giselle sat rigid, wondering if she could make a break for the back door and wondering if he was the type to keep it locked.

"Sell me," he demanded, looking at her now.

The woman set down the gin and tonics and then faded back into the shadows of the hallway. Giselle said nothing.

"Tell me about the man in the mask," he said, grinning again, grinning wide, too wide, "tell me about those poor old retired people. Come on," he said, his eyes taunting her, "sell me. I want it. I do. I mean, I really need you people and your high-tech bullshit..."

He held her eyes, gulped half his drink and set the glass down again. "I mean really," he said. "For my peace of mind."

**I**t wasn't the fender bender on the freeway the night before or the 200 illegals lined up and looking for work on Canoga Avenue at dawn, and it wasn't the heart-clenching hate he still felt after being forced into early retirement two years ago or the fact that he'd sat up all night drinking gin while Glenys slept and the police and insurance companies filed their reports—it wasn't any of that that finally drove Everett Coles over the line. Not that he'd admit, anyway. It wasn't that little whore from SecureCo either (that's what she was, a whore, selling her tits and her lips and her ankles and all the rest of it too) or the veiny old hag from Westec or even the self-satisfied, smirking son of a bitch from Metropolitan Life, though he'd felt himself slipping on that one ("Death and dismemberment!" he'd hooted in the man's face, so thoroughly irritated, rubbed wrong, and just plain pissed he could think of nothing but the big glistening Mannlicher on the wall in the den)... no, it was Rance Ruby's stupid, fat-faced, shit-licking excuse of a kid.

Picture him sitting there in the first faint glow of early morning, the bottle mostly gone now

and the fire in his guts over that moron with barking face who'd run into him on the freeway just about put out, and then he looks up from the kitchen table and what does he see but a sorry lardass spawn of a sorry tattooed bawling lardass of a father cutting through the yard with his black death's-head T-shirt and loose-leaf and book jackets, and that's it. There's no more thinking, no more reason, no insurance or hope. He's up out of the chair in a shot and into the den, and then he's punching the barrel of the Mannlicher right through the glass of the den window. The fat little fuck, out there under the grapefruit tree, shirt hanging out, turning at the sound, and then boom, there's about half of him left.

Next minute Everett Coles is in his car, feverishly rubbing against the tire in back where the sorry sack of shit ran into him, and slamming out the driveway. He's got the Mannlicher in the seat beside him and a couple fistfuls of ammunition and he's peppering the side of Rance Ruby's turd-colored house with a blast from his Wea- verby pump-action shotgun. He grazes a parking camper on his way up the block, slams a couple of garbage cans, and leans out the window to take the head off somebody yapping poodle as he careens out onto the boulevard, every wire gone loose from his head.

**E**llis Hunsicker woke early. He'd dreamed of a little cloud—the little cloud of the bedtime story he'd read Mifty and Corinne the night before—scudding along in the vast blue sky, free and untethered, the sun smiling at him as it does in picture books, when all at once he'd felt himself swept irresistibly forward, moving faster and faster, caught up in a huge, daytime, malevolent thunderhead that rose faceless from the far side of the day... and then he woke. It was just first light. Hilary was breathing gently beside him. The alarm paled and glowed soothingly in the shadow of the half-open door.

It was funny how quickly he'd gotten used to the thing, he reflected, yawning and scratching himself there in the muted light. A week ago he'd made a fool of himself over it in front of Hilary and Tina, and now it was just another appliance, no more threatening or unusual—and no less vital—than the microwave, the Cuisinart, or the clock radio. The last two mornings, in fact, he'd been awakened not by the clock radio but by the insistent beeping of the household alarm—Mifty had set it off going out the back door to cuddle her rabbit. He thought now of getting up to shut the thing off—it was an hour yet before he'd have to be up for work—but he didn't. The bed was warm, the birds had begun



isper outside, and he shut his eyes, drifting  
e a little cloud.

en he woke again it was to the beep-beep-  
of the house alarm and to the hazy ap-  
nsion of some god-awful crash—a jet  
ing the sound barrier, the first rumbling  
of the quake he lived in constant fear of  
apprehension that something was amiss,  
this beep-beep-beeping, familiar though  
med, was somehow different, more high-  
ed and admonitory than the beep-beep-  
ng occasioned by a child going out to  
e a bunny. He sat up. Hilary rose to her  
s beside him, looking bewildered, and in  
instant the alarm was silenced forever by  
mistakable roar of a gun blast. Ellis's heart

Hilary cried out. There was the heavy  
p of footsteps be-  
a faint choked  
per as of little girls  
ed in their sleep,  
then a strange  
e — high, hoarse,  
raging — that  
ed up the morning  
a set of jaws.  
ned response!" the  
e howled. "Armed  
onse, goddamn-  
it! Armed  
response!"

he couple strained  
ard like mourners  
funeral. Giselle had  
n, she knew that.  
y'd looked scared  
n she came to the  
ar, a pair of timid  
ity faces peering  
at her from behind  
matching frames of  
c prescription glass-  
and they seated  
nselves on the edge  
ne couch as if they  
e afraid of their own  
iture. She had them  
nging their hands

darting uneasy  
nces out the win-  
as she described the perpetrator—"A white  
n, dressed like a schoolteacher, but with  
e wicked, jittery eyes that just sent a shiver  
ough you." She focused on the woman as she  
cribed the victims. There was a boy, just  
teen years old, on his way to school, and a  
nan in a Mercedes driving down to the cor-  
store for coffee filters. And then the fam-  
—they must have read about it—all of them,

and not three blocks from where they were now  
sitting. "He was thirty-five years old," she said  
in a husky voice, "an engineer at Rocketdyne,  
his whole life ahead of him . . . and she, she was  
one of these supernice people who . . . and the  
children . . ." She couldn't go on. The man—  
Mr. Dunsinane, wasn't that the name?—leaned  
forward and handed her a Kleenex. Oh, she had  
them, all right. She could have sold them the  
Super Deluxe Laser Alert System, stock in the  
company, mikes for every flower in the garden,  
but the old charge just wasn't there.

"I'm sorry," she whispered, fighting back a  
sob.

It was weird, she thought, pressing the Klee-  
nex to her face, but the masked intruder had  
never affected her like this, or the knife-sharp-



ening Mexican either. It was Coles, of course,  
and those sick jumpy eyes of his, but it was the  
signs too. She couldn't stop thinking about  
those signs—if they hadn't been there, that is,  
stuck in the lawn like a red flag in front of a bull  
. . . but there was no future in that. No, she told  
the story anyway, told it despite the chill that  
came over her and the thickening in her throat.

She had to. If only for her peace of mind. ■

# WHEN YOU KICK A LIBERAL

A post-election parable  
By Garrison Keillor

Our mothers brought us all up to be nice people. We all knew what it meant. Around the age of fifteen we may have thought niceness was too uncool and was retarding our development as sex symbols and we may have bumped around in the dark for a while, being nice and trying to hide it, but eventually we came out as a *very nice* person, or *basically nice*, or *nice once you get to know him*. Or not so nice.

Nice people are quiet and responsible and don't make you pay a big price for their presence. They don't beg or threaten, they are self-effacing, and they do what they can to make human life smooth and enjoyable. The fact that there are no flies on you doesn't qualify you as nice, nor the fact that you never burned the flag or that an independent prosecutor has decided not to seek an indictment. It's who you are that counts, not your reputation.

So it's unfortunate that nice people are so sensitive about vicious slander.

When your Aunt Hazel, the Mother Teresa of Bonhomme, Iowa, hears via the Methodist grapevine that a neighbor named Mildred has told numerous Bonhommeans that she, Hazel, isn't as nice as everyone thinks

but is "selfish" and has a "glorified opinion" of herself, it knocks your poor aunt flat on her back. Stunned, she leaves the Community Outreach luncheon in tears, drives straight home, and spends the afternoon

down." Hazel is unable to think those terms. She's all torn up over

Of course, who can blame Mildred that Hazel's extreme niceness invites disbelief? Hazel's reputation suffers from a lack of negative

Her faithful service to church, the library, the C Scouts, the 4-H, the p board, the Bijou Theater renovation committee, the soup kitchen and shelter where she volunteers three days a week, her Sunday visits to the county jail, the parade of damaged children she has taken under her wing, her lifetime of Christian charity and hopeful good humor in the face of drought and illness and death—people are hungry to hear a bit



weeping on the couch, bewildered by hostility from a woman she had gone out of her way to be nice to. She imagines Mildred cutting her up all over town with lie after shabby lie; but this cruel injustice does not make your aunt angry—it fills her with sadness, and she feels depressed for days, imagining the terrible things people are thinking about her. It does no good to tell this wonderful Christian woman, "Ignore that slut. She's a tramp, a liar, a piece of baggage. She drinks big tumblers of sherry in the morning, her house is filthy, her cucumbers are puny, her begonias are all eaten up with bugs. Don't let the bitch get you

word about her. Some Bonhommeans suspect that Hazel suffers from occasional depression and that she must take medication for it. They speculate about this from time to time. On the other hand, she were a professional wrestler named Olga the Mistress of Death and Whore of Babylon—a three-hundred-pound witch with black lipstick and green-and-purple hair who spat big gobs on the flag and carried a whip and waggled her boob at the referee and gouged her opponent Betty Anderson's eyes at screamed weird obscenities into the darkness, she'd have a million fans around America, including many

Garrison Keillor's new book, *We Are Still Married: Stories and Letters*, will be published in April by Viking.



homme, who'd say, "You in real life Olga's really a nice n. She knits and cooks and is de- l to her husband and children." s Hazel the Soul of Kindness she hard row to hoe: after her three les of good works, people say, "I heard that she may have seen a psychologist at one time."

America is a big two-hearted for- g country. If Hitler were alive y, he'd be on the *Today* show, ng about his new book, *My Strug-* Around the country, people would away from the toaster and stare e little screen: *Hitler*. "A lot of le still have hard feelings toward because of that whole Auschwitz g, you know," the host is saying. at do you say to that? How do you with animosity on that level? I n, personally, you and Eva. Is it h on your marriage? How do you ain it to your kids?" The former er speaks in rapid German and we a woman's voice translate: "Bry- a person can't look back. I live in future. People who still carry a ge from forty—what was it? *fif-* years ago, that's a tragedy. The es about genocide are so old and n-out and threadbare, and the ple who repeat them are—I'm sorry to have to say this—they're e pitied. I feel sorry for them. Life garden, a summer day, a fragile erfly, the smile on the face of a d. Why would I kill millions of ole when I myself love life so h?" Some dog food is then sold, owed by instant coffee, and then e back for the weather. Coming n the next half-hour, a report on Luke: Did he steal some parts of gospel from other sources without ibution?

people can forgive anybody for just ut anything but they don't respect ody, and so a miserable sinner with redeeming virtue is equal to a teous person with a secret fault. ybe better. The prodigal son's ther learned that lesson one day ut 6 P.M. in St. Luke's gospel when stumbled through the back door e-tired from another ten-hour day ing corn and heard happy voices l found a crowd of family friends on patio, the fatted calf on the spit,

the band warming up, the beer on ice, and the honored guest, Donnie, dressed in rags and smelling of pig shit, and his dad hugging him. His dad had never hugged *him*, hardly even squeezed his hand, his dad wasn't a hugger, but he was all wrapped around the prodigal. The brother said, "What's happening? Oh, hi, Don. Nice to see ya, fella. *What's going on, Dad?*" Then he caught the gleam on Donnie's finger. "The *emerald*? You're giving him the emerald ring that you told me—Dad, you promised me that ring. Two years ago. This isn't right, Dad." Hot angry tears filled his eyes, but nice person that he was, he also felt darn guilty about making a stink when everybody else in the parable was jumping up and down.

His dad said, "Look! It's Donnie! He left and now he's back! Be happy! We're having veal tonight!"

So Donnie's brother smiled and had a beer, but with a certain contrary inner resonance. *Great. Wonderful, Dad. Terrific. I'll be hitting the sack now. Back's killing me, but never mind. Night-night. Maybe I'll sleep in the pig-pen, seeing as how you go for that. See ya later, Don. Help yourself to my stuff. Clothes, jewels, shekels, just take what you need, Don. Take my room. Want me to introduce you to my fiancée Sheila?*

Soon afterward, the prodigal's brother joined a humane society opposed to cruel practices in the meat industry, e.g., calf fattening. Poor dumb animals kept chained up in cramped dark pens and force-fed to produce pale tender veal for a feast to honor a jerk. The brother was a liberal, or Samaritan, as liberals were known in those days, and while there were a few bad Samaritans, about 95 percent of them were nice people who would have stopped to lend assistance to anyone who needed it—a man set upon by thieves, for example. But if you run off and waste your substance on riotous living with a fast crowd in Galilee, you shouldn't expect to come home and get a feast and a ring and a big hug.

The Old Story: jerks rewarded, nice people abused.

Take the liberals that our next president, George Bush, spent the campaign kicking down the stairs, the

one or two that Ronald Reagan hadn't kicked already. These aren't Iranian liberals, they're a bunch of extremely nice American people. Call them reformers, progressives, New Dealers, or call them the Great Satan of Massachusetts and His Hounds of Hell: liberals are fundamentally democrats with a quick social conscience who carry water for a million good causes from here to 123 Maple Street, Anywhere, U.S.A. They are teachers, boosters, and inveterate instillers of social obligation. Call them school-marms, goody two shoes, busybodies, or bleeding hearts: basically, a liberal is a person whom you know very well and who loves you very very much, perhaps more than you deserve.

Who wanted you to be aware of the hungry children in China as you played with the food on your plate?

Who taught you to take turns on the swings and share your cake with other children and made you feel guilty for being such a greedy selfish little child?

Who taught you to be decent to children whom you despised?

Who, when you lost the game and incurred the silent wrath and contempt of Dad, took you into her arms and said she loved you?

Who could possibly be more liberal than that?

*M is for Minorities and the helpless,  
O is Obligation to the poor,  
T is Taking money from the greedy,  
H is Helping beggars at our door,  
E of course is Eleanor our Mother,  
R is Reagan's mom, the lovely Nelle.*

*A fine old Christian liberal and a lady—*

*He kicks her down the stairs,  
but what the hell.*

**T**he old lady lay face up on the dank cellar floor, stunned and dizzy. A Sunday afternoon and she had been fixing pot roast and potatoes in the kitchen and then—it all happened so fast: the sudden blows from her two sons, the long terrible fall backwards down the steps like in a nightmare, her hands grasping for the railing as she slid half sideways and then turned a complete somersault and banged headfirst on the concrete. She couldn't see. Her neck felt as if it

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might be broken, and also her wrist. She could taste blood. It seemed to be a loose tooth in mouth. Her head started to pulse with pain. She lifted her left hand and touched her forehead. A dent there and something wet. A radio was playing upstairs. She could hear him breathing. Her dress was gathered above her knees and as she tried to straighten it she saw, standing in the light at the top of the stairs, an arm, Ron and George, laughing.

"Guess we showed you!"

She raised her head. What had she said to make them so angry? She was tainly was sorry, whatever it was. She had been too hard on them about their projects? She didn't mean to be a scold. She moved her head. Ronnie, George, but no sound came out. She struggled to her knees. George took two steps down and touched her.

"Pew. Guess you learned a lesson. Guess you won't be buttin' inna business, Ma! Huh, Ron? Guess you won't be tellin' me what to do for while, huh!"

The pain in her head was deadening, and the words wouldn't come out. *O my dear boys forgive me for provoking you to anger. But no matter what you do—if you kill me and throw my body in a ditch and rip out my heart, I member that with the last beat of my heart I will always love you. A liberal love can never be less. Never, no matter what you do.*

"Kinda weak on defense, ain't it, Ma? Ha ha ha." With the last ounce of strength in her battered body, she hoisted herself to her feet and stared up at the tall laconic young man in the light.

"Mother! Your dress!"

She looked down and saw that her blue knit dress had fallen down in a heap around her ankles, leaving her clad in a black spandex bodysuit. She didn't know she possessed and a pair of black knee-high steel-toe garoo combat boots with white laces and red-and-blue sequins. Her hair was long and snarly, not in a bun as she usually wore it, and in her right hand she held a long riding crop.

### SOLUTION TO THE DECEMBER PUZZLE

D	A	N	D	R	U	F	F	M	I	L	L
E	B	F	R	I	A	R	I	A	D	O	A
L	A	R	Y	N	X	A	B	R	O	O	M
F	L	O	W	S	L	Y	B	O	O	T	S
T	O	P	E	E	E	G	E	O	R	G	E
A	N	A	L	O	G	P	R	N	B	A	N
M	E	L	L	O	W	E	D	P	A	R	T
B	E	D	S	D	M	P	S	O	N	A	R
E	R	I	F	L	E	P	A	L	D	G	A
R	E	N	T	E	R	E	L	E	V	E	N
S	D	P	O	S	E	D	E	S	I	S	T

### NOTES FOR "MOVING PARTS"

ACROSS: 1. DU-FE; MANI (anagram)-R-ILL; 2. FA(i)R; A-R-I-D(rink); 3. LYNX, "links"; B(ARR)OOM. 4. FLY(B)LO (anagram)-W; SO(O)T; 5. TOPE(anagram)-E; GORGE, two meanings; 6. GOL(d), reversed. BANANA(s); 7. ME-WED; ROLL-A-P, reversed; 8. BEAR(D)S; NOS., reversed; 9. R-(L)IFE; PALL, "Paul". 10. REL-ENTER; NEVE(r), reversed; 11. POSSE, anagram; DEIS(anagram)-T. DOWN: 12. DEF-T. AMBLERS, anagram; 13. A-LONE, "loan"; BARED, anagram; 14. PAL, reversal; ODIN, hidden; 15. DWEL(anagram)-L(ascivious); T(O)RY; 16. RISE, "ryes" & Lit; NOODLES, anagram; 17. (t)AXE(s). MERLE, anagram; 18. (el)F(in)-AY, & Lit; P-REPPED; 19. FIBER, anagram; SABLE, hidden; 20. MOO-N. PAROLES, anagram; 21. DON-OR; BAD, reversal; 22. GAL-COT (reversal); RAGES, anagram; 23. LAMENTS, anagram; (flag)RANT.

SOLUTION TO DECEMBER DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 72). (N)ORMAN CORWIN: TRIVIALIZING AMERICA. The tree of liberty need not, as Jefferson said, be refreshed with the blood of patriots and tyrants. . . there are . . . better fertilizers: reason, calm inquiry, and understanding. . . It behooves us to instruct the groundkeeper that dissenters are not weeds to be pulled up.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 73, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's Magazine*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by January 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the February issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 71 are Marion Baran, Spokane, Washington; Keonaona Peterson, Brooklyn, New York; and Irving Saunders, Roseburg, Oregon.



ss her bosom were silver-lamé  
rs two inches high that spelled  
HELLUVA WOMAN.

mother?"  
Don't say another word," she said,  
"I'll bust your heads."  
"om?"

ie placed her right foot on the  
stair, keeping her weight nice-  
balanced, her eyes fastened on  
ge as he shrank back whimper-  
She shook her head slowly and  
ed and licked her lips. "Liberal,"  
said. "I'm going to liberate you  
from ignorance or die in the at-  
ot." She grabbed both banisters  
rocked up and down on the balls  
er feet, and took three long deep  
ths, and sprang like a tiger, her  
arms outstretched, her eyes  
ing bright red, and the sound she  
e deep in her throat was one they  
never ever heard before. ■

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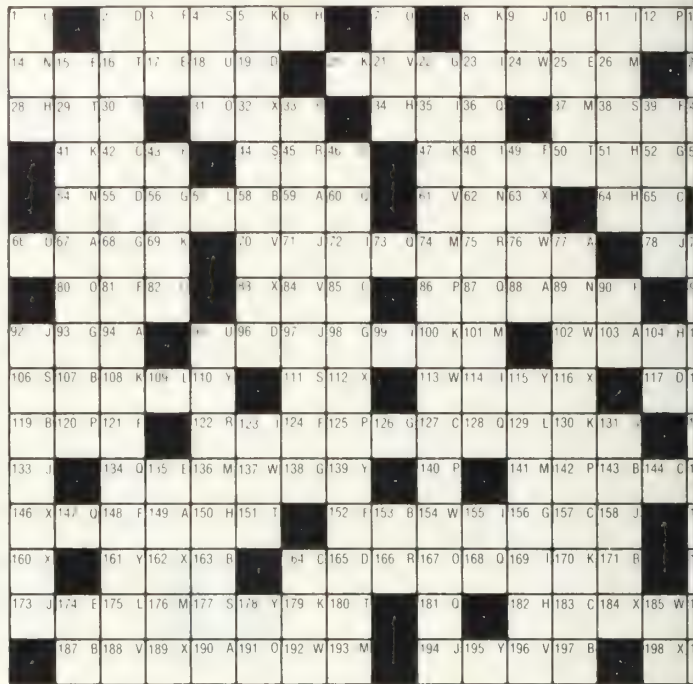
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# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 73



**T** by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 74.

## CLUES

## WORDS

- A. Notice; care; courtesy  
67 190 94 103 77 27 149 88  
59
- B. Broad-mindedness; generosity  
171 153 157 163 143 119 107 58  
197 10
- C. Too overwhelming to be expressed  
127 157 85 164 79 183 144 42  
65
- D. 14,162-ft. volcanic mt. of Calif.  
96 2 165 117 19 55
- E. Where a horse comes in to show  
174 135 17 25 43
- F. Hors d'oeuvres, e.g.  
39 124 90 121 15 81 148 3  
49 152
- G. Coarseness  
156 93 52 138 56 68 126 98  
22 185
- H. Most helpful or reliable (hyph.)  
104 13 182 28 34 64 51 150  
6
- I. Character actor (1903-78), voice of Francis the Mule (full name)  
11 114 169 155 99 35 72 48  
23 123
- J. Far off, remote; hidden (3 wds.)  
78 97 194 92 133 9 173 158  
71 30
- K. Stew, assortment, medley (2 wds.)  
41 130 100 170 8 179 20 5  
108 69 47

- L. Stupid; awkward; blockheaded  
57 129 175 118 109 53
- M. Common, ordinary  
26 141 136 193 37 74 176 101
- N. Constellation containing the Hyades and the Pleiades  
54 14 89 40 62 172
- O. Drug derived from Indian hemp  
191 7 66 80 167 199 31
- P. Brain, highbrow  
142 120 86 12 125 140 91
- Q. 1930s and '40s term for a hepcat, jitterbug, or rug-cutter  
128 168 73 147 60 181 134 36  
87
- R. Mature fillies  
166 45 75 122 33
- S. Erode (2 wds.)  
38 106 177 4 44 111 131
- T. Extent, scope  
16 29 180 151 50
- U. Town of Asia Minor where Alexander the Great defeated Darius III of Persia  
1 18 82 95 46
- V. Card game involving a pegboard  
70 188 132 105 61 196 84 21
- W. Shorten  
145 154 185 137 76 102 159 24  
113 192
- X. Official sanction (2 wds.)  
160 32 162 198 146 189 184 116  
63 83 112
- Y. Type of Muslim  
139 195 178 115 161 110



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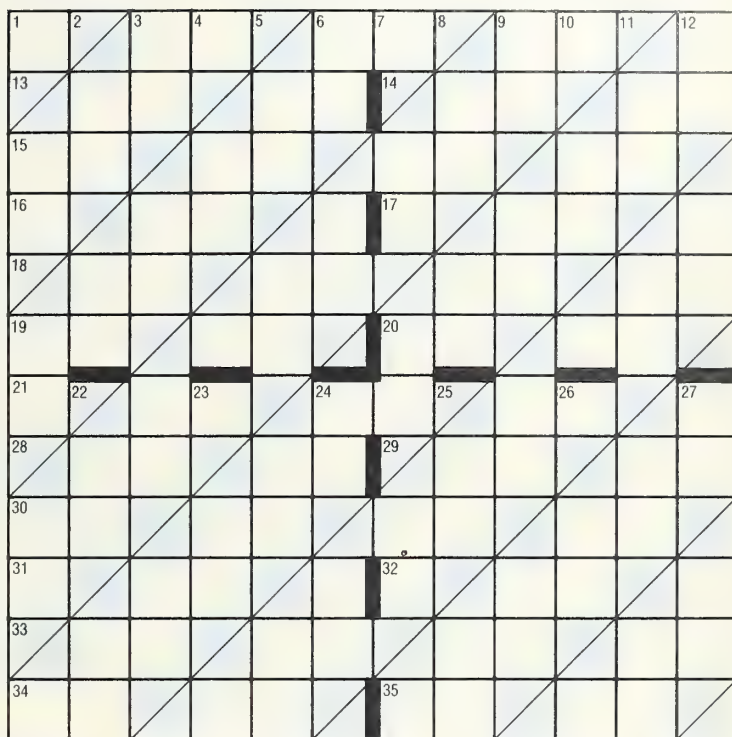
# PUZZLE

## One in Three

by E.R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

The general rule in constructing the diagram for cryptic puzzles is that no more than one letter in three in any entry can be left unchecked by a crossing entry. In this diagram that rule is exactly observed: every third letter is unchecked via the shaded squares. However, each shaded square contains two different letters, one for the Across entry and one for the Down entry. For uniformity's sake, put the letter for the Across entry in the upper left half of the square.

Clue answers include uncommon words at 7A and 31A, one place name, and a common word (25D) that isn't in the dictionary. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 74.



### Across

1. Client's right to be represented is a Southern specialty (12)
13. The mob's assuming I'm back taking chances (6)
14. Small farm located in lower Anchorage (6)
15. "Chichi" is deserving, unfortunately, to be in the Oxford English Dictionary (12)
16. Reject statement barring cats and dogs and squash (6, two words)
17. It's an awful chore, after beginning to take pill (6)
18. She sends men off without love, showing generosity (12)
19. Caper, possibly, describing noun! (6)
20. Going through lawyer, immediately getting framed (6)
21. Some people born this month collecting recycled tin . . . they collect old things (12)
28. Fliers distributed in rain around Maine (6)
29. Short finish for parody (6, hyphenated)
30. Navy uncompromising about Coors? On the contrary, they're contracting for it! (12)
31. Able to laugh with irascibility (6)
32. Born during revolution, returned to improve things superficially (6)
33. WASP you once allowed to take in common laborer (12, two words)
34. Stretched out and felt pain around back of shoulder (6)
35. Gives credit to wife in department store (6)

### Down

1. Ford plots with curmudgeons (12)
2. Around unfinished bird cage, eggs (6)
3. Rudely blame Pinter when taking English beyond understanding (12)
4. Sailor quietly running fish (6)
5. Replace Ron in D.C. . . . i.e., it's misconduct (12)
6. Bell and General Electric set up a drink (6)
7. Disposed to overeat, stirs health tonics (12)
8. Remuneration in Siam is said to produce capital in Orient (6)
9. In innocent, terribly heartless cutely there's lechery (12)
10. Officer shot coon in New Mexico (6)
11. See grub chewed up in good spirits—that's fast food (12)
12. Most in a huff subsequently take it easy (6)
22. Flower to live when treated (6)
23. Unit is deployed at the original place (6, two words)
24. Opens a seam, revealing uranium and information about sulfur (6)
25. Fix the cat? It needs regulation after last month (6)
26. Small aquatic animal swimming abeam, eating nothing (6)
27. Smart agent conceals tiny piece (6)

**Contest Rules:** Send completed diagram with name and address to "One in Three," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the March issue. Winners of the November puzzle, "Triple Headers," are Edward J. Brandao, New Orleans, Louisiana; Winifred Peirce, Devon, Pennsylvania; and William R. Alcorn, Cleveland, Ohio.

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*By Douglas J. Preston*

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## LETTERS

### Naming the Winner

I have been staring at "Contempt in Court" [Readings, October 1988] for several weeks now, wondering about the outcome of the confrontation between Judge Hubert I. Teitelbaum and the plaintiffs' attorneys, Barbara Wolvovitz and Jon Pushinsky. What happened after Judge Teitelbaum refused to call Wolvovitz by her own name, insisting that Pennsylvania law required her to be identified by her husband's surname? Did she ask for a mistrial? Did the judge send her to jail?

Several of my friends are just as anxious to know how it ended. One even read the transcript aloud at a party my husband and I held to celebrate our wedding. Did Wolvovitz triumph? Your readers want to know, especially this one. Because the wedding is over and I am still—

Ms. Carolyn Adolph  
Toronto, Canada

*Editor's Note:* Judge Teitelbaum quickly found Pushinsky in contempt of court for "officious intermeddling" and sentenced him to thirty days in jail. (The judge later changed his mind.) Pushinsky then motioned for a mistrial, which was denied. Wolvovitz said she could not proceed with the trial if the judge continued to call her by a name other than her own. Teitelbaum replied, "You'll do what I tell you to do, or you'll be up with your colleague there in jail."

Later, but not in the presence of the

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

jury, the judge said, "What if I call you 'sweetie'; is that all right?"

After this event was made public, Teitelbaum apparently underwent a change of heart. His prepared apology said, in part,

I want to say to you, Ms. Wolvovitz that... I recognize your right to be addressed in any manner in which you see fit and I apologize for my comments and the resulting situation. I am fully committed to the equal treatment of all persons and to oppose discrimination in any form, on any basis, whatsoever.

By my comments, I did not mean to imply that you or other women were less competent or less capable than men.

At the time I made the statement about the law of Pennsylvania requiring a woman to use her married name unless she had the permission of the court to use her maiden name, it was my recollection or opinion, at the time, that this was in fact the law of Pennsylvania. I have since learned that my recollection in that regard was in error. In other words, I was wrong. I made a mistake. I have made some before and I will probably make some again in the future.

The judge offered to grant the lawyers a mistrial, which they declined after consultation with their clients. They lost the case.

Today Pushinsky continues in private practice. Wolvovitz is executive director of the greater Pittsburgh chapter of the ACLU. Teitelbaum recently retired.

### Deprived of Innocence

I'm a high school teacher, and I read "Quabbin" [Readings, October 1988], by Nicholas Bromell, and thought his observation that we no longer inhabit our present moment illuminates the burden of cynicism borne by the young people I know.

Bitterness seems so paradoxical



young. Children should play and dream, but today they are forbidden to experience that measure of wholeness which engenders innocence. Instead, they are forced to live in the same competitive future as adults. The reason, as Bromell writes, is that our present has been "contaminated." Our children see such contamination every day in the form of child abuse, drug addiction, alcohol pollution, and material obsession. Their youth has been effectively eled.

To cope with the future foisted on them, my students work at part-time jobs, hoping to buy a car or a college education or to escape a bad life. With no commitment to the future—the realm where ethical choices matter because they shape the future—our young are left to delude themselves, as Bromell suggests, with what they consume.

Thus, preparing conscientiously for SAT or assimilating material from a course is pointless when the purchase of an intensive prep course virtually guarantees the appearance of success in the test.

Our children cry out for emotional

and spiritual nourishment, and desperately desire the ability to affect the future. But they find themselves, as Bromell writes, lying "athwart the precipice over which abundance cascades into nothingness." Should adults be amazed, then, if they turn in despair to drugs or suicide?

Pamella Hays  
Bigfork, Mont.

## Make Them Laugh

If your panel of sitcom brainstormers ["Lay Pipe, Add Heat, Get Laughs!" November 1988] was searching for genuine novelty in American TV, it should have conceived of a series that ends.

American television producers have deluded themselves into thinking that character development is the most important element in programming. Longevity and profitability are what make the sitcoms go 'round. Why end *The Cosby Show* when you're getting \$300,000 per minute in advertising?

What will happen to *The Cosby Show* is what has happened to every

long-running series; it will gradually descend into mediocrity, and then the audience will feel the slow burn of resentment. "That show *used* to be so good," we have said about *All in the Family*, *Hill Street Blues*, etc., "but it just isn't the same this season."

The premise for any series is not inexhaustible. A hit series actually unravels its own reality by providing season after season of intense experience without resolution. Good theater condenses the wider reality and makes us reflect upon our own. The British, incidentally, have already figured this out.

Kent Echler  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

If anybody really wants to create a TV series to keep Americans laughing into the Nineties, he or she would hardly hire the same writers who have done the job so poorly in the Seventies and Eighties.

Your forum participants focused entirely on the *situation* rather than on what makes people laugh. Humor can be evoked in almost any situation—as is demonstrated by the range

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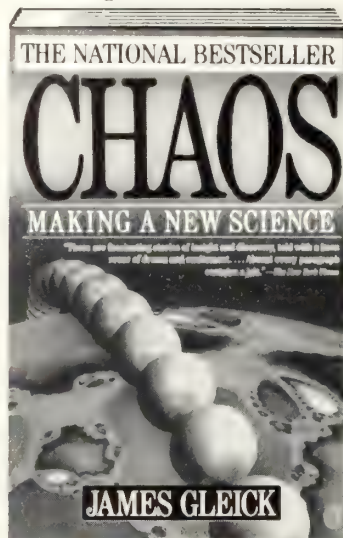
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*All in the Family* worked because of Archie's inadvertent expression of repressed thoughts and his comical distance from the very people he lived down.

Television programming wasn't necessarily funnier in the past, but the best shows exploited what makes the situation comic.

Alan Krugman  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Please, television writers, no more affluence! The great myth of this decade is that we will be happy if we are rich enough to surround ourselves with trappings of wealth.

Marion Blackburn  
Rocky Mount, N.C.

## The Death of WPN-114

Like William Kittredge ["In the Backyard," October 1988], I love the Great Basin. His last paragraph, however, does not serve the reader well. The story of the scientist who destroyed the oldest living tree is beautiful in fact, but Kittredge cruelly twists the truth in order to equate science with federal bureaucrats.

Here's the real story, based on accounts in *American Scientist* and *Ecology*. A scientist was studying bristlecone pines of Wheeler Peak in the late summer of 1964 as part of a dendrochronology study in the Southwest. One of his tools was a Swedish incremental corer, used to take a pencil-size rod of wood from a tree to analyze growth rings. Corers at the time, were hard to get.

As the scientist cored a tree similar to dozens of others, his corer jammed. Faced with the likelihood of ruining his tool, and thus the rest of his search season, he hiked down the mountain to discuss the problem with a U.S. Forest Service ranger. Permission to cut a single tree had been granted in the past, and under

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ure of the approaching winter, ranger decided to sacrifice the The ranger and the scientist back up the mountain, cut the and freed the tool. Thus died the known as WPN-114, age 4,900 200 years. Only later did the men ze what they had done.

ttredge portrays an irresponsible artist who "took a chainsaw to he thought to be the oldest tree ne mountain . . . in order to count ears." Nothing could be further the truth. Let Kittredge write he scientist and the ranger—two est, responsible men who loved re no less than he. How would onvey their despair at having the edible misfortune to destroy the st living thing in the world?

rls S. Hendricksen  
mond, Wash.

### urring the Line, Again

applaud your bold venture into publishing of self-conscious fic- . Although Lee K. Abbott's short y ["The View of Me From Mars," e 1988] was only passably clever, it not until he invented the persona "Susan Kenney" (who claimed ott based his story on her story out appropriate credit [Letters, tember 1988]), and then expand- he conceit with a responding let- (defending his use of "her" story), t the piece truly achieved its re- ming dimensions. Such blurring of e line between fiction and reality," use "Kenney's" words, was a mas- ul stroke.

With the addition of the two ficti- is letters, the story seems at least as d as Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, which plays a similar trompe l'oeil tech- ue.

A friend has an interesting theory: an Kenney is the *real* author, who in fact, the genesis of "Lee K. Ab- t's" story, and "his" letter.

hope I do not confuse the issue her by causing your readers to culate that this letter, too, is part the narrative charade; my fiction not appeared in *Harper's Maga-* e, until now.

n Harmon  
acuse, N.Y.

*You deserve a factual look at . . .*

## Saudi Arabia

### Does it support America's interests in the area?

Since the fall of the Shah and the great upheaval in Iran, we seem to have designated Saudi Arabia as our "ally", a country whose policies and goals are supposedly in accord with ours and that can be expected to promote our interests and policies in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf area. And Saudi Arabia is generally referred to as a "moderate Arab" nation.

### What are the facts?

■ In the 1920's, American exploration firms discovered the world's largest oil fields under the eastern Saudi desert. As a result, the Saudis and their small neighbors became the richest nations in the world, far surpassing in per-capita product and income long established industrial nations. Not content with this enormous wealth, the Saudis spearheaded the creation of OPEC. It is a price-fixing cartel, which would be totally illegal under U.S. anti-trust laws. This cartel has managed to increase the price of oil by more than tenfold. In doing so, the members of OPEC — primarily Saudi Arabia — were able to amass almost unimaginable riches.

At the same time, they caused grave economic dislocation to the Western industrial nations and brought ruin and famine to many of the so-called third world countries.

■ What do the Saudis do with all this wealth? Much of it goes to the maintenance of the most extravagant lifestyle of the Saudi "royal" house and hundreds of "princes" and their hangers-on. Some of it goes for ostentatious public projects. But much of it goes to bankrolling terrorists and troublemakers in the Middle East and in the rest of the world. For example, Saudi Arabia is the main support of the terrorist PLO, which would financially collapse were it not for Saudi Arabian aid. Saudi Arabia finances Syria to the tune of \$750 million per year. Syria is a close ally of the Soviet Union, a state based on terror, and a sworn enemy of the U.S.

■ The Saudis have participated in every one of the Arab wars against Israel, since Israel's founding in 1948. They are totally committed to continued warfare until what they hope will be the destruction of Israel and "recovery" of Jerusalem. Saudi Arabia has systematically thwarted any peace initiatives to resolve the Arab-Israel conflict, continues to maintain a state of war with Israel; refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, and

perpetuates, through the Arab League boycott, an international economic warfare intended to strangle Israel.

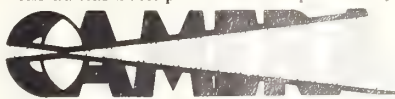
■ The Saudis clamor constantly for more and more sophisticated weapons from the U.S. They claim to need these weapons in order to protect their kingdom, their oil installations, and the Gulf shipping lanes from the Iranians. They have purchased \$2.9 billion of war materials from the U.S. and vast additional quantities from western Europe. But now that this arsenal is available and could be engaged, do they use it? Of course not! They call on the U.S. for help.

■ Because of their unwillingness to assist in their own defense during the Gulf war, we had to put over thirty war ships and much other material in the area and thousands of U.S. sailors, whose lives were at risk and quite a few of whom were lost. Why, then, if they refuse to defend their own country, do the Saudis need all this expensive and deadly hardware? To quote the Saudi defense minister: "It is focused on Israel." And he was echoing King Khaled, who said: "When we build our military power, we have no designs on anybody except those who took away our land and holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are!" The way things seem to be planned by the Saudis, it may not be too long before their F-15's will join Syria's MIG 29's (also bought with Saudi money) to fight Israel's F-15's in another devastating Middle East conflagration.

■ Are the Saudis grateful to the U.S. for being so generous with protection? Despite the fact that the U.S. Navy was and still is in the Gulf for their protection, the Saudis have steadfastly refused to put any of their installations and bases at the disposal of the U.S. The cost to the U.S. taxpayer is a minimum of \$200 million so far. Will the Saudis pick up any of that tab? Of course not! When the Iraqi fighter plane attacked the "Stark" and killed 36 American sailors, the U.S. urged the Saudis to pursue the Iraqi plane and to bring it down if necessary. What did the Saudis do? They flatly refused!

Saudi Arabia is not "moderate". It bankrolls Syria — the Soviet Union's ally and client state — and is the paymaster of the terrorist PLO. Its arsenal is not destined to the defense of its territory against Iran, but for the next "jihad" — what they hope will be the final war of extermination against Israel. They are no friends of America or of the West. They do not cooperate with us in the defense of our strategic interests — they single-mindedly pursue their own agenda. As to the "oil weapon", they wield it ruthlessly to amass the riches of the world and to disrupt the economies of the West.

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# NOTEBOOK

## Quetzal

By Lewis H. Lapham

*I am going to teach the South American  
republics to elect good men*

—Woodrow Wilson

*Guatemala City  
Friday, November 11*

On Friday night, doing fitfully in the front seat of the car on the drive up into the mountains from Tiquisate, I noticed—far off, the angle of its light shifting with the turns in the road—what I thought was the flare from an oil refinery or an unfamiliar constellation of stars. I watched the glow in the sky for the better part of an hour before I understood that I was looking at an erupting volcano. The plume of fire looked like the feather of an exotic, golden bird. The sight apparently is so common in Guatemala that the driver hadn't thought to mention it. He was talking instead about his friends in the army who had cleared the road of bandits and about how safe the country had become for the practice of democracy and free trade. His status as a tutor of foreign journalists suggested that he enjoyed the confidence of the military authorities. Within a matter of weeks, he said, he expected to receive a government contract to truck cornflakes and tinned meat to the Sandinista army in Nicaragua.

At Tiquisate earlier that afternoon, the driver had conducted a television crew on a tour of the latticed buildings from which the United Fruit Company once dictated the terms of the Guatemalan economy. In the hour before dusk the crew sat around a large, round table cut from a single block of polished wood, listening to the recitation of an ancient majordomo who remembered what the world was like when he supplied the lobsters and the orchestra for the

company's Saturday night dances. Gesturing toward the buildings now abandoned and overgrown with vines, the retired purveyor of colonial luxury said I should have seen the place in the good old days when the company provided for everybody and imported everything—schoolteachers as well as croquet mallets and French wines—from cities as far away as London and Paris.

Listening to the elegy for a lost commercial empire, I thought of Woodrow Wilson and Hernán Cortés. Wilson, because I was in Guatemala making a documentary film and I had been reading history books about the wayward course of our diplomacy in Central America. Cortés, because I couldn't imagine how the small bands of Spanish adventurers had forced their implacable conquest through the long line of mountains that runs from Mexico to Peru. By comparison, the British conquest of India seemed like child's play.

Yesterday we were in Sololá, in the shadow of the majestic volcanoes on the shore of Lake Atitlán, and I wondered what sort of sermon Wilson would have preached to the descendants of the Maya Indians. The conquistadors didn't bother with moral niceties. They seized the gold, slaughtered the Children of the Sun, and imposed on the land of earthquake and fire the rule of the Spanish language and the Catholic religion. The women selling shawls on the sides of the steep and broken roads wear skirts woven in the colors assigned to them by their Spanish overlords in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Different combinations of colors signify different parts of the country, which allowed the Spaniard on horse back to judge at a glance whether the Indian on a mule had gotten to some-

place where he didn't belong.

The United Fruit Company of Boston began buying the rights to Guatemala in 1902, at about the same time that Wilson was propounding fundamental axiom, "What America touches, she makes holy." The perversors of American commerce in Guatemala enjoyed the comforts of colonial rule without worrying about the cruelties of empire. Being Americans they knew that their hearts were pure and their business, by definition, just. They owed allegiance to a corporation, not a flag. Unlike imperial Spain, democratic America did not impose on the natives a language or religion. The Americans preferred to be seen as pals, friendly and commercial people who would win the war not by force but by virtue of their moral example. Not with guns or swords or riding boots, but with cigarettes and smiles and Bible readings.

Wilson offered his political instruction to the Mexicans in the spring of 1914, but he might as well have been talking about the Guatemalans or Cubans or the Panamanians or any of the other Latin American people who, from the perspective of Washington, always look so much the same. The Mexicans made the mistake of allowing Victoriano Huerta to become their president. Wilson thought Huerta a thoroughly bad man. Wishing to rescue the Mexicans from error and to set before them an example of enlightened democracy, he ordered the United States Marines to land at Vera Cruz and establish a government more closely allied with his own Christian way of thinking.

Had he been asked to explain his policy, Wilson undoubtedly would have said that he was performing a service for the good of the Mexi-



and the greater glory of man-  
If the Mexicans were too stupid  
to childish to recognize their own  
interests, then it was the duty of  
the United States to provide the blue-  
print of the Mexican future. How  
could a morally responsible nation fail  
to otherwise? Would not any up-  
member of any decent commu-  
to the same for his gardener or his  
nanny? For the sons and daugh-  
of the cook? The poor little beg-  
barely spoke English, and in the  
face of a kindly patron what would  
one of them? Like Pinocchio,  
might fall into the hands of  
adversaries and communists.  
The Guatemalans in 1950 took just  
a foolish chance with a destiny  
wasn't made in the U.S.A. They  
elected as their president Colonel Ja-  
rre Arbenz, a reform-minded mil-  
itary officer, who, in a European  
context, might have been understood  
as a social democrat. Arbenz had no  
idea that the United Fruit Company  
owned 42 percent of the Guatemalan  
economy (as well as the railroads, the  
sugar mills, and all the banana  
trees), and he thought the com-  
pany's holdings a trifle excessive.  
As a presidential candidate, Arbenz  
went so far as to suggest that some  
of the land might be sold back to  
the Guatemalan people at the price  
established by the United  
Fruit Company's own tax lawyers. In  
Washington the suggestion was re-  
garded as an insult tantamount to a  
declaration of war.

The Americans were willing to put  
up with almost anything, but not with  
blasphemy of land reform. Land  
reform called into doubt the Ameri-  
can belief in the sacred nature of pri-  
vate property. Private property was  
the heart of democracy was all about, as  
fundamental to the orderly workings  
of the universe as the corn harvest or  
rain.

Secretary of State John Foster  
Dulles and to his brother Allen  
Dulles, director of the Central In-  
telligence Agency, Arbenz instant-  
ly revealed himself as a communist  
and was hired by Moscow to foment re-  
volution in the innocent Americas.

Intending to teach a Wilsonian les-  
son, the State Department posted to  
Guatemala a new American ambassa-



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dor, John Peurifoy, who was as boyish and swaggering a jingoist as Teddy Roosevelt or Ollie North. He spoke no Spanish and knew nothing of Guatemala. It didn't matter. From the point of view of the brothers Dulles and the small cadre of Washington officials who wrote the rules of American foreign policy, Peurifoy was a blunt but useful instrument. Rabidly anti-communist and stupidly self-righteous, the ambassador was in the habit of walking around Guatemala City with a pistol in a shoulder holster. He thought of himself as a star player in the great varsity game of the Cold War.

Early this morning we set up the camera in the reception hall of the National Palace, where, in October 1953, Peurifoy presented his diplomatic credentials to Arbenz. A grandiose block of gray stone built in the 1930s, the palace joins elements of the Spanish baroque with fascist variations on a theme by Albert Speer. The tutor of foreign journalists wanted to be sure that I took careful note of the magnificence of the reception hall. He pointed to the carving in the ceiling, to the stained-glass windows (depicting the dream of the Mayan past), to the overstuffed armchairs reserved for generals in uniform, to the ornate, gilded chandelier on which, if I looked carefully, I could see four gold birds with long tail feathers.

"The quetzal," he said. "The bird that expresses the spirit of Guatemala. It cannot live in captivity."

I nodded appreciatively, thinking of the feather of fire I had seen rising from the volcano and neglecting to mention the four soldiers dressed in combat fatigues who stood along the walls with automatic rifles.

In June of 1954, eight months after Peurifoy arrived in Guatemala City, the CIA staged a comic-opera rebellion meant to frighten Arbenz and chase him out of his palace. The rebellion relied on CIA radios broadcasting false information about the size and whereabouts of a rebel army that was largely imaginary. CIA pilots, flying small Cessna aircraft, dropped hand grenades to simulate bombing attacks. The chosen American puppet—Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas—crossed the border from

Honduras in a Ford station wagon but he never commanded more than 400 men or advanced more than twenty-five miles into Guatemala. His best tactical advice he received from the United Fruit Company resident press agent, who instructed the colonel to hide in the mountains, cut his telephone communications and avoid, at all costs, any contact with American newspapers. If the reporters were to discover that his "regular insurgency" was a fraud, they might tell Arbenz, and if Arbenz knew he was surrounded by a troupe of actors, he might remember that he had an army of his own.

Unfortunately for almost everybody concerned, the *coup d'état* succeeded. Guatemala was delivered into the hands of a military dictatorship and in Washington the sponsors of the charade puffed themselves with delusions of geo-political grandeur. Seven years later, still preening itself in the mirror of its triumph in Guatemala, the CIA produced Cuba the tragic farce at the Bay of Pigs.

The CIA trained the doomed vanguard of Cuban exiles at a coffee plantation not far from Lake Atitlán, late Saturday afternoon, driving on a narrow road high above the lake. It passed, in sudden bursts of light and shadow, through the clouds drifting among the volcanoes. I asked the tutor of foreign journalists if the Indians in these parts ever gave much thought to politics. He didn't think so. Fes- them, he said, took the trouble to learn either Spanish or English. Barefoot in the market towns the women balanced baskets on their heads, but the men held nothing in their hands except the knives with which they pruned the coffee trees. The explosions on their calm and lovely faces shifted as suddenly as the light, impassive as stone, and then, in a twinkling of a moment, illuminated with smiles as bright as flowers.

I remembered what the tutor of journalists had said about the quetzal. He was wrong about the golden bird held captive in the cage of the National Palace, but in the high mountains, apparently, the quetzal could be seen among the Mayan ruins or in the eyes of a laughing child.



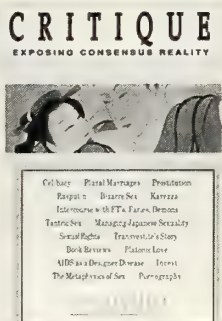
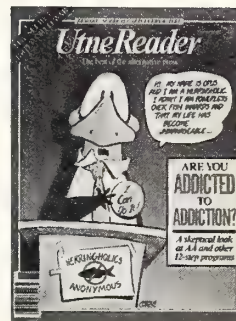
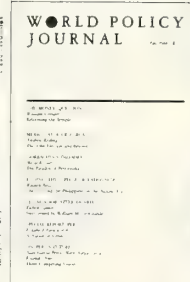
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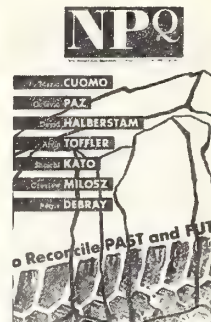
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Chances that a homeless American holds a full- or part-time job : 1 in 5

Portion of all single-family homes sold in the United States each year that are mobile homes : 1/4

Number of Americans who have been relocated since 1982 because of toxic dumping : 4,880

Projected federal spending in 1989 on cleanups of nuclear-weapons plants : \$973,417,000

Projected federal spending in 1989 on construction of nuclear-weapons plants : \$403,000,000

Amount of energy that leaked from windows in the United States in 1988, expressed in barrels of oil : 522,000,000

Barrels of oil that flowed through the Alaska pipeline in 1988 : 740,000,000

Percentage change, since 1986, in the price of crude oil : -24

Percentage change, since 1986, in the combined profits of the seven largest multinational oil companies : +18

Amount Drexel Burnham spent copying documents requested by the SEC for its investigation : \$46,000,000

Portion of the \$25,000,000,000 awarded each year in liability lawsuits that goes to attorneys : 1/3

Percentage of state and local district attorneys who say that marijuana should be decriminalized : 25

Chances that an American born this year will have been exposed to illegal drugs in utero : 1 in 10

Estimated chances that a couple married this year will get divorced : 2 in 3

Price of a one-year subscription to Incurable Romantix, a computerized love-letter service : \$35 (see page 26)

Estimated number of anti-viral computer programs on the market : 36

Portion of all university funding for computer science research that comes from the Pentagon : 2/3

Percentage of black college students who attend black colleges : 17

Percentage of 1987 black college graduates who graduated from black colleges : 34 (see page 51)

Change, since 1984, in the life expectancy of a black American, in years : -.3

Of a white American : +.1

Percentage increase, since 1987, in the number of children killed by guns in Broward County, Florida : 209

Number of the 41,000 applicants for concealed-weapon permits in Florida in 1988 who were turned down : 246

Percentage increase, since 1978, in the number of private security firms operating in Colombia : 127

Percentage increase, since 1981, in the number of acres in Colombia that are planted in coca : 762

Percentage of Americans who say that the United States should normalize relations with Cuba : 53

Rank of Brazil, among all countries, in the number of reported AIDS cases : 3

Number of condoms sold in Japan each year, per adult male : 23

Number sold in the United States each year, per adult male : 5

Average number of hours that Americans say they feel "romantic" each day : 1

Amount of time it would take for all the Coca-Cola ever sold to flow over Niagara Falls, in hours : 23

Amount of styrofoam waste generated by McDonald's in the United States each year, in cubic feet : 1,500,000,000

Total volume of the World Trade Center towers in New York City, in cubic feet : 54,000,000

Chances that a space shuttle will collide with orbital debris during a seven-day mission : 1 in 3,500

Number of people who have been in orbit : 212

Percentage of *Gilligan's Island* episodes that were about getting off the island : 32

Percentage of the audience of *thirtysomething* who are in their thirties : 29

Number of the 23 cast members of the 1989 Chicago production of *Hair* who wear wigs : 20

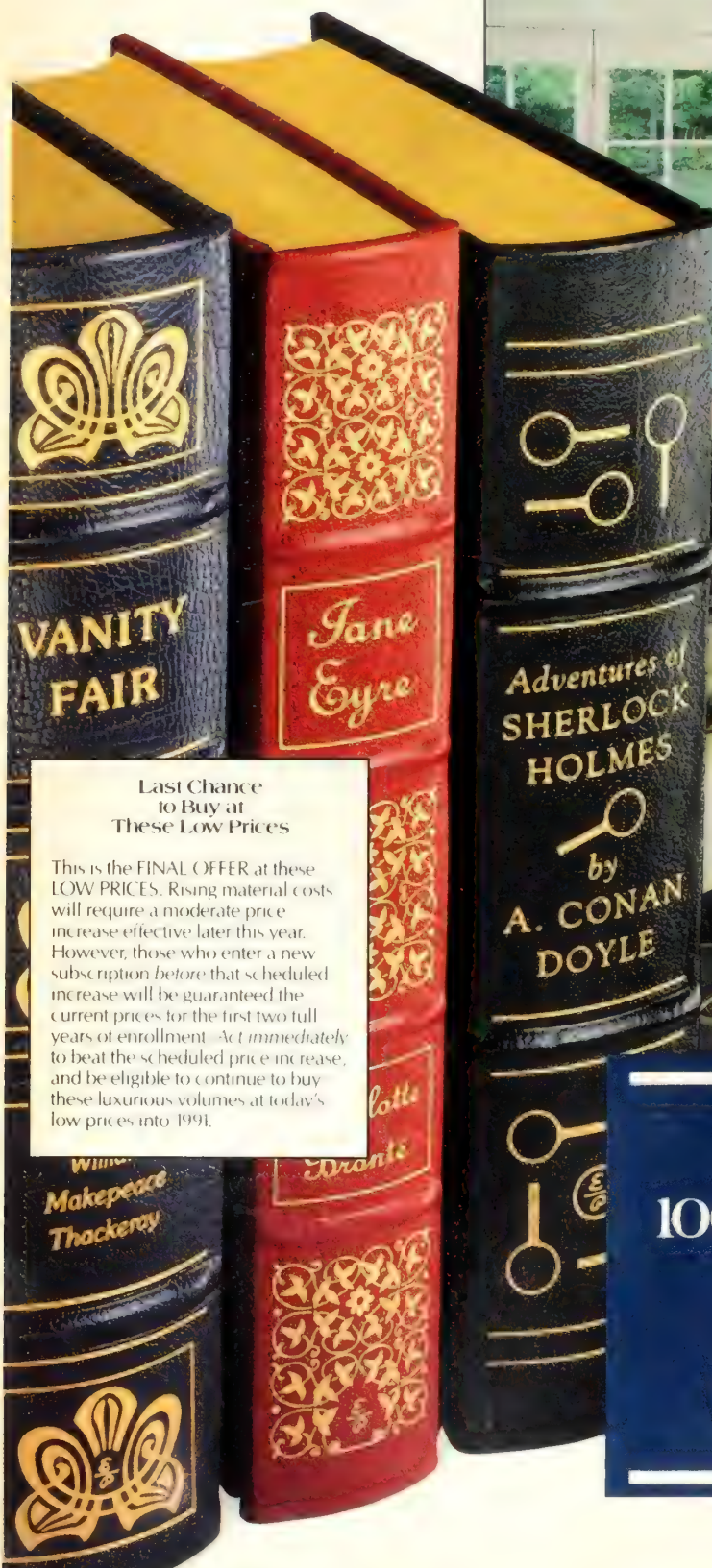
Total time that the song "Yesterday" has been broadcast or performed since it was written in 1965, in years : 29

Number of years Steve Jenne of Springfield, Illinois, has saved a buffalo sandwich bitten into by Richard Nixon : 23

*Figures cited are the latest available as of December 1988. Sources are listed on page 76.  
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# READINGS

[Letter]

## WHY I WON'T GO TO GERMANY

*Adapted from a letter by Cynthia Ozick, published in the Winter 1988 issue of the Quarterly. Ozick's collection of essays Metaphor & Memory will be published this spring by Knopf.*

Dear Professor X:

Thank you for your letter inviting me to Germany to participate in a conference on current "German-Jewish relations" in the aftermath of the Holocaust, initiated and organized by distinguished Jewish Americans, yourself among them, and joined on your letterhead by other Americans of distinction and by prominent Germans of goodwill. It is very kind of you to have had me in mind; I am touched by your generosity and trust. I wish my response could have been simpler than it is destined to be.

Professor X, I am a Jew who does not, will not, cannot, set foot in Germany. This is a private moral imperative; I don't think of it as a "rule," and I don't apply it to everyone, particularly not to German-born Jews, who as refugees or survivors have urgencies and exigencies different from my own. Not to set foot in Germany is for me, and I think for many garden-variety Jewish Americans like myself, one of the few possible memorials; and it seems to me unsurprising that in this connection a memorial should take the form of a negation, a turning away.

But there is another point of view as well, one that may be more relevant here. Yours is the fourth invitation I have had to go to Germany. Each was issued with the best will in the world:

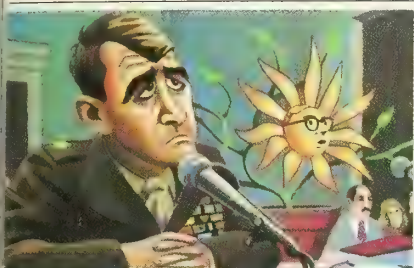
a German hand reaching out in peace from a democratic German polity—a remembering hand, never a forgetful one. The hand of the "new generation." The more that hand reaches out in its remembering remorsefulness, in its hopeful goodwill, the more resistant my heart becomes.

Here is why. I believe that all this—the conscientious memorializing of what happened four and five decades ago to the Jewish citizens of Germany and of Europe—is in the nature of things an insular and parochial German task. It is something for the Germans to do, independently, in the absence of Jews—the absence of Jews in contemporary Germany being precisely the point. The German task is, after all, a kind of "liberation" (of conscience into history), or emancipation, and the only genuine emancipation—as we know from many other national, social, and cultural contexts—is auto-emancipation. So when Germans want to reflect on German-Jewish "reconciliation," or—skirting that loaded word—German-Jewish "relations," it seems to me they are obligated to do it on their own. Does that strike you as impossible, if not absurd? A hand held out in friendship to someone who isn't there? How can "relations" with Jews be achieved in the absence of Jews? Well, that's exactly the difficulty, isn't it? Europe no longer has what it used to call its "Jewish problem," the Germans having solved it with finality. But there remains now a German problem—the ongoing, perhaps infinitely protracted, problem of the German national conscience—and its gravamen is that the Jews aren't there.

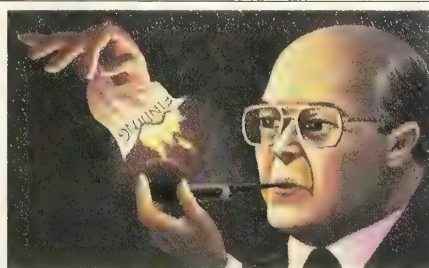
It appears that what Germans of goodwill have been doing lately—and more and more they are doing it with the aid and counsel of American Jewish organizations—is evading the



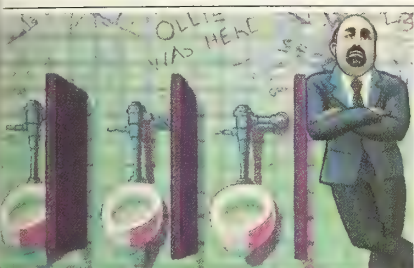
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JOHN POINDEXTER



MANUCHER GHORBANIFAR



CARL "SPITZ" CHANNELL

These cards are from a set of thirty-six Iran-Contra Scandal Trading Cards, created by Paul Brancato and illustrated by Salim Yaqub; they are distributed by Eclipse Enterprises of Forestville, California. The back of each card describes the role of the person depicted. These capsule histories are based on information compiled by the Christic Institute, a public-interest law firm in Washington that has filed suit against several figures in the scandal.

tumultuous epicenter of the problem, even as they struggle to offer more and more evidence that they are facing it. There are no native-born Jews over fifty to achieve "relations" with. Germany is a Jewish museum: apartments, furniture, old neighborhoods newly populated, the old headstones that survived vandalism in the museum-cemeteries or were heaped up as rubble barriers against tanks. Not the old synagogues, though; these were mainly burned. If an old volume by a popular author of the twenties turns up, it has the antiquarian interest of a rare book: books by Jewish writers were burned in every public square—who doesn't know this? The notion of a Jew as a kind of surprising vestige or anachronism—as, in fact, an actual museum piece—is apparently pervasive in Germany, and was once brought home to me by a representative of a German publisher who, after a conversation in New York, wrote me a warmly intended letter: *My time with you was different from any other experience; it was like a visit to a museum.*

The German solution to this perplexity—to the absence of native-born Jews of my genera-

tion—has been to behave in a manner inspired, perhaps, by the straightforward realm of international economics, of demand and scarcity. If you have depleted through your own folly your native (and plentiful) supply of Jews, and now you feel remorseful, what do you do? You put an order in to America—which, rather than depleting its supply of Jewish citizens, has nourished and multiplied it—and you import living foreign Jews to stand in for the native missing Jews.

I am afraid that all such programs—wherein Jewish Americans offer themselves (always out of the ideals of humaneness, reconciliation, hope for the future) to stand in for the murdered Jews of Europe—are mistaken at the core and, in any case, cannot help the Germans. The Germans must undertake memorial explorations under their given condition of scarcity—the absence of native Jews. Why must an American writer, a Jewish citizen of the United States, be imported for a conference on "German-Jewish relations"? Only because there is no German-born Jewish writer of her own age who is alive to speak. So a foreign surrogate must do.

But it seems to me that this principle of surrogacy is conceived in profound error. Who will dare to suggest that any living Jew can offer reconciliation—or even simple human presence—on behalf of the murdered?

Then let Germans of goodwill do it on their own. They, not American Jewish sponsors, should be the organizing spirits behind Holocaust conferences on German soil—conferences by and for Germans. The Final Solution was applied to Jews—Jews were its victims; but the barbarities of the Nazi era are by no means a Jewish issue. They are an issue of German culture and certainly appropriate for examination by German institutions and conferences, but not, in my view, with the assistance or participation of foreign Jews. Here is an instance where “reconciliation” and “relations” may not, cannot, be a collaborative act, i.e., a project between Germans and Jews, belonging equally (or even unequally) to both. Because if it appears to be collaborative, the act becomes a lie. The Germans in truth have no one to “collaborate”

with but phantoms—the missing, the murdered, the Jews *not there*.

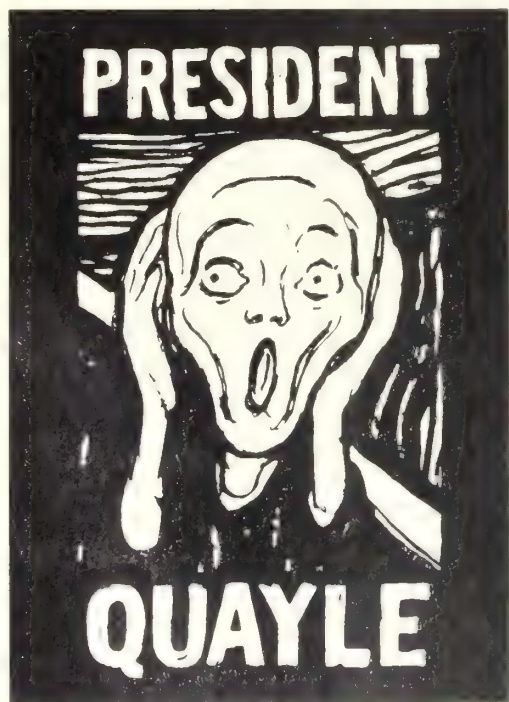
Living Jewish Americans can't serve as surrogates. Anne Frank, before the Annex, before the flight to Holland, was a German Jew: had Germany not given its allegiance to the criminals and programs that murdered her, who can doubt that she would today have been a luminary of German letters? Which American writer can stand in for Anne Frank, gassed in adolescence? Human beings are not bauxite; one bundle of Jews is not interchangeable with another bundle. The Nazis objectified Jews and made them interchangeable bundles. Ah, the bitterness of the irony that, in the name of “German-Jewish relations,” in the name of goodwill and the hope of present and future humaneness, the interchangeability of one group of Jews with another is still being pursued on German soil!

That, I think, is the German dilemma; and that is what the “concerned Germans and Americans” on your letterhead need to come to grips with. When Jewish Americans go to Germany to “help”—i.e., to supply Jewish representation at a Holocaust conference—they aren't making it easier for the Germans to see into the soul of the dilemma, namely the loss of *German-Jewish* representation; the Americans are confusing the question by abetting the tragic and degrading falsehood of human interchangeability.

I am sorry to be so astringent. I have thought about these matters for a long time, and with growing distress as the decades pass and more and more American Jewish organizations fly to Germany in search of similar collaborative objectives. Your letter, by the way, arrived on the very day another letter came to me, this one from a German university—a warm and impressive and earnest letter from an extremely able Ph.D. student (I judge this from the intelligent voice of her fine English sentences) who is interested in fiction written by Jewish Americans, and who has settled on my work as the subject of her dissertation. A self-described “special case” because of her preoccupation with American Jewish writing, she sketched her family background: “My father became a soldier when he was seventeen. His father was a theologian of the Protestant Church and had the position of superintendent. Even though my father's father began to mistrust the National Socialists quite early in the thirties, he was a patriot and thus sent four sons into the war. Three of them were killed.” Three dead uncles. I grieve at the obtuseness of this. With all the goodwill in the world, my young correspondent (born in 1955) remains incapable of understanding that a German “patriot” would, at least in his heart if not

[Poster]

## D.C.'S 'SCREAM'



This anonymous poster appeared on Washington streets during the campaign last fall.



in his (by then, let us try to concede, coerced) actions, acknowledge that to fight for Hitler was not German patriotism but a betrayal of Germany. And this from a "theologian of the Protestant Church" in an atmosphere of rampant official anti-Semitism. To whom, I can't help wondering, did this theologian give his vote? Was his "mistrust" of the Nazis "early in the thirties" a feeling of immediate alarm and peril, or one of ballot-box regret after the damage was done? My correspondent is clearly engaged, from her point of view, in an intellectual project of remorse and restitution; and yet she cannot recognize the most fundamental first necessity—an understanding of what patriotism means: that it is something you do for yourself, by yourself, out of obligation to the moral improvement of your country; that it is above all a dream of self-transformation. It would be better all around if she would neglect the study of "American Jewish fiction" and begin a cultural meditation on her grandfather's mind.

[Newsletter]

## A GAG ON NUCLEAR WORKERS

From a special edition of the Security Newsletter, distributed by Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory (KAPL) to its employees. KAPL designs reactors for nuclear submarines; it is a government-owned facility that is operated by General Electric and located in Schenectady, New York. This newsletter was submitted as evidence in a suit against G.E. and the Department of Energy by one current and two former KAPL employees and the workers' union. In March 1988, one of the plaintiffs was dismissed shortly after disclosing to a DOE inspector general that as many as 1,500 KAPL workers may have been exposed to dangerous levels of radiation. The plaintiffs claim that the newsletter, dated September 15, 1988, infringes on the free speech rights of current and former employees by restricting their efforts to expose threats to worker and public safety. The plaintiffs are represented by the Government Accountability Project in Washington.

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[Letter to the Editor]

## BUSH'S LIPS: A HISTORICAL NOTE

*This letter to the editor, by Stan Lee, appeared in the December 26, 1988, issue of the Nation. Lee lives in New York City.*

**I**t looks as though it has fallen to my lot to settle the major issue of the 1988 presidential campaign. I have been resisting this ever since the Republican convention, but even the redoubtable William Safire, in his "On Language" column in the *New York Times*, has failed us dismally. Or perhaps the *Times* couldn't bring itself to break the story.

I doubt if the preppie Bush knows what he's been saying all these months, but I would be curious to know the background of the speechwriter who gave it to him.

You see, I grew up in the South Bronx about a thousand years ago, and the phrase was, unfortunately, only too common there. When someone really wanted to put you down in those days, he would—uh—pass wind and say contemptuously, "Read my lips."

I feel confident that the *Nation* is the true publication of record and will not let this bit of political arcana slip through the cracks of history.

—Stan Lee

ment were made.

This restriction includes comments on naval reactor program statements appearing in newspapers, magazines, and books, or made in speeches, on TV, at open meetings, or even in casual conversations.

The fact that specific classified information has appeared publicly is itself classified. In addition, the fact that information has appeared publicly does not make it unclassified. Therefore, employees should not confirm, deny, or otherwise comment or expand on any question raised about the accuracy, classification, or technical merit of such information.

KAPL employees are also cautioned that even after a person leaves the program, he or she remains responsible for protecting classified and sensitive unclassified information.

It is best to avoid any discussion of program work. Where this is not practical, guidance

must be sought from the KAPL classification officer, concerning what statements can be made on an unclassified basis.

Another important security aspect of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program is that all public releases of information concerning program work (i.e., technical meetings, forums, etc.) must be reviewed and approved prior to release. This includes releases to Department of Energy and its contractors outside the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. Therefore, while employed at KAPL, if you are required to make statements about program work to the public, formal approval must be obtained.

It is up to all of us to protect Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program information in the interest of national security. If we fail, vital information could be compromised.

Any deviation from the above policy is unacceptable.

Remember, unauthorized release of information can:

1. Jeopardize your job
2. Result in a security violation with possible associated penalties of fines up to \$100,000 and life imprisonment.

[Resignation Letter]

## A VALENTINE FOR RON

*From a letter written by John S. Herrington, then Secretary of Energy, to Ronald Reagan. After the November 1988 election President Reagan requested the resignation of all Cabinet members in order to expedite the transition process. Herrington first worked for Reagan as an advance man in the 1966 California gubernatorial campaign.*

November 9, 1988

Dear Mr. President:

I am submitting my resignation to you, effective January 20, 1989, with pride and honor. In 1966 I heard you speak, and I signed on for the full tour. Lois, my wife, says I even came home and said I had met a man I thought should be president. You were running for governor of California, and I was a young lawyer, a criminal prosecutor, searching for truth. You said two things that were new then that touched me. You said, "Be part of the solution, not part of the problem" and "A man will spend the money he earns better than the government will spend it for him." Not bad thoughts even today.

Lois and I went to work for your victory in

1966, and I joined the national effort as a volunteer in 1968. My first event was Chicago. Did you know that one of the most challenging jobs of my life was stepping off a plane in Chicago in 1968 representing a Hollywood actor who wanted to be president? I will always remember the endless stories, the friends made, the work, and the ups and downs from 1966 to 1981. The riot in San Jose, the endless rallies in places like Springfield and Topeka, conventions in Miami, Kansas City, and Detroit. Tempered by fire and adversity, you stayed, you survived, you educated, and you put new meaning into the definition of tenacity. You made so many of us proud to be part of your efforts to change America.


In 1980 I closed my law office in California to volunteer for your election, full time. I told Lois I had to give it my full effort. It was in the San Fernando Valley in October 1980 that I realized you were going to make it. We were standing outside on the lawn of a workingman's synagogue on an early fall evening while several hundred members inside were giving you a standing ovation. The full impact of it all hit me. You were going to be president of the United States!

Later, near election day, my heart was in my throat when your helicopter lifted out of the Santa Monica airport in dense fog and had to follow the San Diego Freeway to reach the ranch. God was on your side—and America was going to be better off than it was that day.


It has been twenty-two years. What an honor! To be a Cabinet officer in the Cabinet of the most important and historically significant president of this century is beyond description. But to be in the Cabinet of a man you love, admire, and respect is an even greater distinction. America is truly better off than it was in 1980, and most Americans know it. You have changed the way the country thinks. I am so proud of you, Mr. President; I'm proud of what we have done together. My family, like millions of American families, is better off than it was. But more than that, our children, who tore up their roots in California to come to Washington with us, are proud too and will carry on your legacy. You have made such a difference. You have touched chords of the American dream. You have inspired, challenged, educated, and loved. They will honor you for generations, but your memorial will be the lives and traditions you left behind, the policies that made us stronger, the memories that touched our hearts, the vision of the future, the strength in the quiet storm of the 1980s. You were a rock, you were our strength, our light, our intellectual leader. "The Gipper" won one for himself, for Americans, for humanity, and for history. We came with you, Mr. President, and we will leave with you. You're




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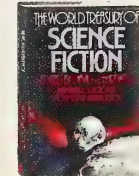
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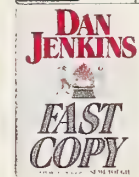
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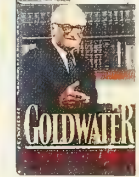
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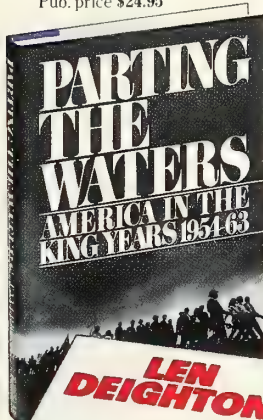
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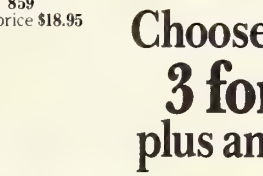
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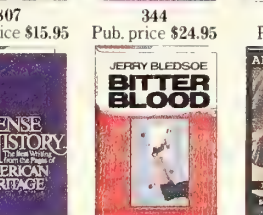
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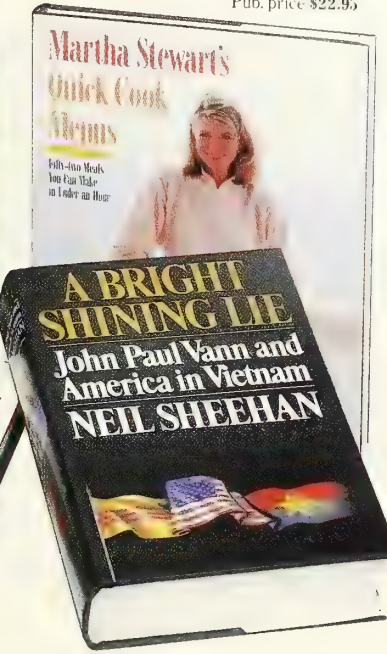
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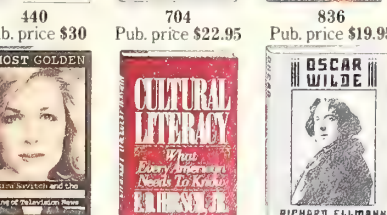
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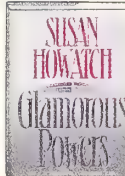
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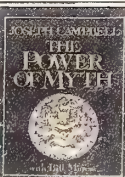
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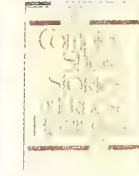
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[Guidelines]

## PUTTING A LID ON THE PLO

From "Summary of the Meeting Held by the Director-General; November 15, 1988," a document circulated by the Israeli Broadcasting Authority and published in the Tel Aviv daily *Hadashot* on November 17. The meeting was called by Uri Porat, head of the Broadcasting Authority, to set policy for radio and TV coverage of the Palestine National Council's Declaration of Independence, which was issued in Algiers early on November 15. At the meeting, Porat announced that the term "Palestinian state" could not be used on TV or radio; "PLO state" would be an acceptable alternative.

**A**fter our discussion of coverage of the Algiers conference, and on the basis of facts presented therein, the following decisions were made:

1. In all reports dealing with the events in Algeria, a clear distinction must be made between conveying important information and spreading propaganda or statements made in order to serve the propaganda aims of elements hostile to the state—the state media do not exist for this purpose. In short: information—yes; propaganda—no. In others words, with regard to elements hostile to the state: news—yes, opinions—no.

2. Speeches made at the Algiers conference must not be broadcast—neither sound tracks nor pictures.

3. No interviews, commentaries, or responses should be aired unless they are made by persons in official positions recognized in this country or abroad.

4. No studio panel discussions or debates should be held on the above-mentioned subject.

5. It is permissible to present a chronicle of developments connected with the issue, but only via the voice of the newscaster.

6. Commentaries that explain processes are permissible, on the condition that they are done by authorized commentators on military or Arab affairs. As part of such commentaries, it is permissible to broadcast background voices and short background pictures, but only as illustrations along with the voice-over.

7. These instructions will be in effect from today until further notice.

the guy who brought us. Therefore, my resignation shall be effective at twelve noon on January 20, 1989.

Thank you, Mr. President, thank you from the bottom of my heart. You and Nancy have the gratitude of Lois and me and our family. May you both have fair winds and following seas all your days. God bless you, and God bless America.

Sincerely,  
John S. Herrington

[Essay]

## NOTES ON YOUR CENTRAL EUROPE— AND MINE

From "To Cave Explorers From the West: Some Words of Advice From Hungary," by György Konrád, in the Fall 1988 issue of *Dissent*. Konrád's most recent book is *Antipolitics*. This article was translated from the Hungarian by James A. Tucker.

**I** have been living in Budapest for decades now, but I wouldn't dare to say that I know the city. Everyone there seems to know something that I don't. Simply looking at other people is enough to make me feel that I am just one of many passersby.

The newcomer, who has spent less than a month in Budapest and is already writing a book about it, may think that our city is an open-and-shut case. He hurries along to the next—to Prague, let's say, or Cracow—in order to dash off the same description there, so that the latest cliché about Central Europe may emerge.

But that quality that we generally call "Western" is, for all its advantages, the price we pay for the hasty cliché. Economical use of time carries with it a harmless superficiality. To create an "authentic account," all one need do is add a touch of local color to the stereotypes of journalism.



The Westerner who travels in East Central Europe also travels through his own wartime past. There are the shortages of wartime, the whiff of danger, the romantic accounts about how good people get into trouble because they are good.

But there is a longing, a bitter sense of deprivation, that the citizen of the West has never experienced. So too a sense of being subject to the powers-that-be which the writer in the



photos]

## DISTANT NEIGHBORS



from *Sister Cities: Side by Side*, a volume of photographs by Dan Higgins, published by Green Valley Film and Art in Burlington, Vermont. After Burlington and Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, became sister cities in 1984, Higgins photographed comparable business and social groups in both communities. Pictured above are the staff of Burlington's Pittenden County Courthouse (left) and the staff of Puerto Cabezas's Tribunal de la Región. Higgins's photographs were exhibited in both cities in 1987. He teaches at the University of Vermont, in Burlington.

West has never felt. There is a tight barrier that is all but impossible to break. Literature is one attempt at breaking out.

Our burden is the state; the Westerner's is the voluntarily adopted cliché of majority rule. Our burden seems to us the more oppressive. There are those who console themselves with the idea that the palm tree grows taller under a weight. Who knows? In any case, all of us are deformed by our civilization.



We do not live in the delirium of change. It is not our experience that everything has undergone a dizzying transformation. We find, instead, that the essentials are permanent: homes, friendships, the basic questions.

Much has changed in our lives, but many things only superficially. The deeper beneath the surface we go, the more illusory the change:



We are the needy relatives, we are the aborigines, we are the ones left behind—the backward, the stunted, the misshapen, the down-and-out, the moochers, parasites, con men, suckers. Sentimental, old-fashioned, childish, uninformed, troubled, melodramatic,

devious, unpredictable, negligent. The ones who don't answer letters, the ones who miss the great opportunity, the hard drinkers, the babblers, the porch sitters, the deadline missers, the promise breakers, the braggarts, the immature, the monstrous, the undisciplined, the easily offended, the ones who insult each other to death but cannot break off relations. We are the maladjusted, the complainers intoxicated by failure.

We are irritating, excessive, depressing, somehow unlucky. People are accustomed to slighting us. We are cheap labor; merchandise can be had from us at a lower price; people bring us their old newspapers as gifts. Letters from us come sloppily typed, unnecessarily detailed. People smile at us, pityingly, as long as we do not suddenly become unpleasant.

As long as we do not say anything strange, sharp; as long as we do not stare at our nails and bare our teeth; as long as we do not become wild and cynical.



The nature of the writing profession is such that before one sits down at one's desk, one must leave one's identity on the coattail in the front hall. And one must slough off the stereotypes of

one's environment. Above the clouds, the sun is always shining; that is where we meet.

Down here, this miserable self-pity—both individual and collective—interferes with thought, with our ability to see ourselves objectively. We are treated badly; we report this in various ways, or we report this in one voice. So we are treated badly. What can one conclude from this? History smiles on some and not on others. The fortunate sometimes feel an instinctive aversion to the unfortunate.



How would we view our literature if, by the touch of a magic wand, freedom of the press sprang from the soil? If suddenly no courage or morality was needed to write the truth?

A new era of history would dawn if the events in Hungary of 1956 could be called, in the press, a "revolution" by those who feel it was a revolution, and a "counter-revolution" by those who feel it was a counter-revolution.

In this improbable utopian situation our present literature would seem unnecessarily subtle and windy. It would be like emerging from a communal neurosis. We would exclaim, amazed: What on earth was this complicated nonsense we were working on?



We are not on the stage of world history; we do not brag about our power; people do not fear us. Our land is not as spacious, our spirit not as expansive as the Russians'; our mind understands the Western way of thinking better. We judge our circumstances, straitened by the East, from a point of view influenced by the West. Western ridicule counters Eastern inertia. Here one may learn how Eastern and Western mentalities contend—in our heads and in our beds.

Central European culture is both a half-breed and a crossbreed. It contains progress and fatalism. Premeditation and drunkenness. Time is not money here. We talk a lot, we sit at meetings. The trains run slower, the movies run slower.



People in this region must make dangerous decisions even when they are not looking for trouble. A friend of mine once said, in response to a rebuke, that he was not hitting the wall with his head, the wall was hitting him. There are unintentional heroes. Who chooses to be a hero? Normal Western people don't get into such situations.

Many interesting, intense people from here have wandered all over the world, and many have stayed put. We live in the vicinity of Western Europe, in roughly the same cultural sphere, among the monuments of Europe's past.

We are Europe in the past tense, the exotic next door.

Relativism is our peculiarity. We can look at a thing one way and then another. With both cynicism and pathos, a combination unfamiliar in the West.

A few of our visitors have said that during their stay they found something warm, as if remembered from a previous life.

There is a lot of conversation, if you like conversation. From this oral literature, never printed, never recorded, something has settled into our books.

We are at the geographical center of Europe. On a sixteenth-century Spanish map, Europe is a reclining lady; her head is the Iberian peninsula, and her navel is Buda. From Budapest one may look upon life no less effectively than from any other spot on earth.

[Advice Column]

## LUMP IT, LADY

*From "Readers' Lifeline," an advice column, in the July 29, 1988, issue of Yomiuri Shimbun, a daily newspaper published in Tokyo.*

I am a housewife in my thirties, raising three sons. I have been married for eight years. Ever since we got married, my husband has left all the housework to me. All he does after work is drink and watch TV.

We never have any intimate conversations because he ignores me when I try to talk to him. On his days off, he gets up at noon, goes to a pachinko parlor, and comes home late at night. We hardly ever have dinner together as a family.

I have been saving money steadily for eight years in order to buy a house someday, but my husband spends 70,000–80,000 yen [\$525–\$600] a month on drink and pachinko.

When I complain he tells me it is only natural that I should do all the housework and he shouts, "Who do you think is earning your bread?"

I wonder sadly how I could have married a person like my husband, who is only interested in his own happiness, while so many fathers work just as hard as he does but also play with their children when they get home. When I think about these things I become irritated, am unable to sleep at night, and unconsciously take out my anger on my children.

I dream about divorcing my husband and living alone with my children, but when I think about the financial problems this would cause, I can't make up my mind.



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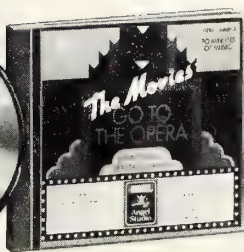
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From Punch.

Do you think I should just divorce my husband rather than raise my children in such a gloomy family? Or, for the sake of my children, should I play the role of the "household employee" that my husband considers me? Please give me some advice.

Mrs. Y.  
Aichi-ken

You are the only woman among four men. You should be proud of your role as "queen" of the house. It is actually you who controls the household. You rule the family through your housework and child-raising responsibilities. You are dissatisfied because you don't like the role of "household employee," which is really a precious role, full of dignity.

It must be difficult for a man like your husband, who has been brought up to believe he has no responsibilities to the house or the children, to understand your dissatisfaction. And he must find it humiliating to hear you complain every time he does something. This is what keeps him out of the house.

The worst thing you can do is to get irritated and gloomy and take your anger out on the children because you will soon start detesting yourself. What you should be doing at this point is fully enjoying housework, taking care of the children, and saving money instead of blaming

your husband for not helping with household duties. Your husband might even feel like trying to help you if he sees you enjoying your responsibilities.

And you should make your children proud of their father by telling them good things about him. A father tries harder if he gets respect.

Michiko Fukazawa  
Counselor

[Letter]

## LOVE BYTES

*This letter was mailed to Incurable Romantix subscribers last year. For \$35 a year, subscribers to the New York City-based service receive one letter each month, which they sign before sending on to their lover. In the letter below, "F3" is to be replaced with the name of the beloved, "F4" with that of the subscriber. The service currently has 450 subscribers.*

My dearest, sweetest F3,

With this Valentine's Day coming so soon, I am filled with expectation. Valentine's Day is a day meant for us to express our love, and I have so very much to express. People all over say so



many things about this special day, and often people make too much of it, but, dearest F3, I feel the full spirit of the day knowing that I have you. We can't make too much of it.

Love is a strange thing, F3. You cannot chase it, you cannot pursue it, you cannot manufacture it. But when it happens, as in the great romance we two now have, F3 and F4, it becomes a treasure that no treasure chest could ever hold. I want to shout out our love over the hillsides, over the mountains, over the oceans, the deserts, the growing fields of grain. I want to write about our love to the great journals of the world, the newspapers, the magazines—to everyone who will ever want to print it, to anyone who will listen.

I want to whisper my love for you, F3, standing with you on a quiet hillside, walking with you on a deserted beach, kissing your sweet lips while we're alone in an elevator, after one of us has had the impulse to push the stop button.

Romantic thoughts about you, F3, come to me all the time, through the days, weeks, and months of the year. But now, as Valentine's Day comes really near, the feelings are growing. I want to make sure that our Valentine's Day together becomes a memorable one, a wonderful one, a day not just to commemorate our love but to make it grow larger, to see it become greater and greater, stronger and stronger.

I am yours this Valentine's Day, F3. Yours forever, for now and for every Valentine's Day to come.

Forever,  
F4

[Essay]

## BEETLEMANIA

From "Beetles," in *Other People's Trades*, a collection of essays by Primo Levi, which will be published by Summit in May. Levi died in 1987. Translated by Raymond Rosenthal.

**I**t is said that the famous British biologist J. B. S. Haldane, when asked by a churchman (at a time when he was a convinced Marxist) to state his conception of God, said: "He is inordinately fond of beetles." We can only agree; for reasons that we do not fully understand, the order of insects to which Haldane is referring—Coleoptera—includes at least 350,000 officially catalogued species, and new species are continually being discovered. Many environments and geographic areas have not yet been explored by the specialists, and it is estimated that at present there exist 1.5 million species of coleoptera:

now, we mammals, notwithstanding our pride in being the crown of creation, do not number more than 5,000 species; at the very most a few dozen new ones might yet be discovered, though many existing species are rapidly becoming extinct.

And yet, the development of coleoptera does not seem all that innovative: it consists simply in having changed the purpose of the anterior pair of wings. They are no longer wings but elytra: thickened and robust, they act solely as protection for the posterior wings, which are membranous and delicate. Anyone familiar with the meticulous ritual by which a cockchafer or a ladybug prepares for flight, and who has compared it with the deliberate and lightning-quick takeoff of a fly, will have noticed that for most coleoptera flight in itself is not a way to escape aggressors but rather a transportation system to which the insect has recourse only for long journeys: a bit like one of us who, when taking an airplane, must subject himself to the business of buying a ticket, checking in, and enduring the long wait at the airport. The cockchafer opens the elytra slightly, maneuvers his wings, finally stretches them, lifts the elytra obliquely and begins his flight, neither agile nor swift. It would appear that a high price must be paid for a good cuirass.

But the coleopteran's armor is an admirable structure. It is a masterpiece of natural engineering and is reminiscent of the iron armor of medieval warriors. It has no gaps: although not welded, head, neck, thorax, and abdomen form a squat, practically invulnerable block. The tenuous antennae can be retracted into grooves, and the legs' articulations are protected by flanges that recall the shin guards in *The Iliad*. The resemblance between a beetle that advances, pushing aside the grass, slow and powerful, and a tank is so striking that it immediately calls to mind a metaphor that can be expressed in two ways: the insect is a small panzer; the panzer is an enormous insect. The back of the beetle is heraldic: convex or flat, opaque or shiny, it is a noble escutcheon.

But it is in the species' manner of feeding itself that the Eternal's fondness for beetles has truly unleashed all of his imaginative powers. There is no organic material, living, dead, or decomposed, that hasn't an enthusiast among the coleoptera. Many beetles are omnivorous, but others feed at the expense of a single animal or vegetable species. There are those who eat snails exclusively and have turned themselves into a tool suited to this purpose: their abdomen is voluminous, but their head and chest have an elongated shape, well suited to penetration. They are living syringes: they plant themselves in the victim's soft body, inject it with digestive

juices, wait for the tissues to disintegrate, and then suck them up.

The very beautiful cetonias or rose chafers (dear to the poet Guido Gozzano, who, in one of the most beautiful verses ever composed in Italian, called them "desperate cetonias overturned") feed only on roses, and the no less beautiful sacred scarabs only on bovine excrement: the male makes a small ball of it, clasps it between his hind tarsi as if between two pivots, and takes off in reverse gear, pushing and rolling it until he finds a terrain suitable for burying it; at that point the female makes her entrance and deposits on it a single egg. The larva will feed on the matter (by now no longer ignoble) to which the farsighted couple has devoted so much effort, and after the molting a new scarab will emerge from the tomb: indeed, according to some ancient observers, the same scarab as before, risen from death like the phoenix.

Other beetles can be found only in slow or stagnant waters. They are splendid swimmers: some, who knows why, swim in narrow circles or complicated spirals; others move in a straight line toward an invisible prey. None of them, however, has lost the faculty of flying, for necessity often forces them to abandon a pond that has dried up and find another body of water, perhaps far away. Once, traveling at night along a moonlit highway, I heard the windows and the roof of my car bombarded as if by hail: it was a swarm of diving beetles—shiny, brown, and edged with orange, nearly as big as nuts—who had mistaken the asphalt for a river and tried in vain to land on it. These beetles, for hydrodynamic reasons, have achieved a compactness and simplicity of shape that I believe is unique in the animal kingdom: viewed from above, they are perfect ellipses from which protrude only legs, transformed into oars.

In eluding dangers and aggressors, these insects "think of everything." Some exotic species, as large as fava beans, are endowed with incredible muscular strength. If enclosed in a hand they force their way out between the fingers; if mistakenly swallowed by a toad (toads will swallow any small object they see moving on a horizontal line), they do not follow the strategy of Jonah gulped down by the whale, nor that of Pinocchio and Gepetto in the shark's stomach, but simply using their front legs like earth movers, they dig their way out through the body of the aggressor.

Another singular escape is performed by the click beetle, that elegant beetle with an elongated body. If lifted or in any way disturbed, it retracts its legs and antennae and pretends to be dead; but after a minute or two a sudden click is heard, and the insect jumps into the air. To execute this short leap, which is undertaken to

disconcert aggressors, it does not use its legs but a curious system of tension and snap. When feigning death, thorax and abdomen are not aligned but form a small angle: a kind of ratchet is released, they straighten with a snap, and the click beetle is gone.

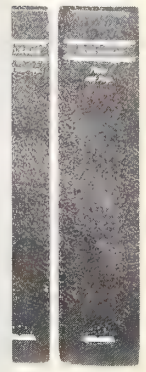
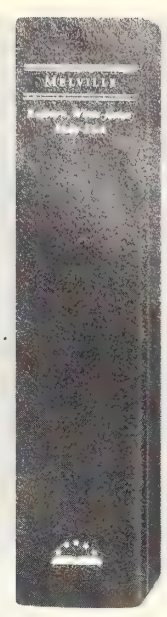
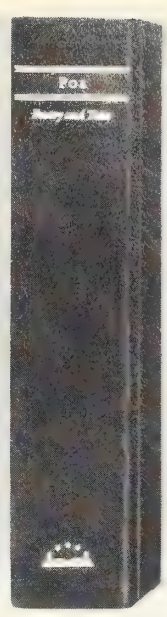
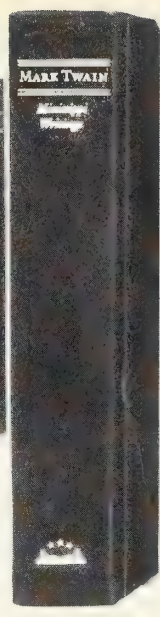
The cold light of fireflies (they too are coleoptera) is not aimed at defense, but serves to facilitate mating. And this too is an invention unique among animals who do not live in the water. But there is a certain species of firefly—the "femme fatale"—whose females imitate the steady light of a conventional female firefly, thus attracting the males and devouring them as soon as they alight beside them.

All these modes of behavior evoke a complex range of impressions: amazement, curiosity, admiration, horror, and laughter, but it seems to me that the sensation of extraneousness or alienation predominates. These small flying fortresses, these portentous little machines, whose instincts were programmed 100 million years ago, have nothing at all to do with us; they represent a totally different solution to the problem of survival. To some extent—even if only symbolically—we humans recognize ourselves in the social structures of ants and bees, in the industriousness of spiders, in the dance of butterflies: but nothing really ties us to the beetles, not even parental concerns, because among coleoptera it is very rare for a mother (much less a father) to see her offspring before she dies. They are the different ones, the aliens, the monsters. Kafka's atrocious hallucination was not chosen by chance—when the traveling salesman Gregor Samsa "awoke one morning from uneasy dreams," he found himself changed into an enormous beetle, so inhuman that no one in his family could bear his presence.

So, then, these different beetles have shown a marvelous capacity to adjust to all climates, have colonized all ecological niches, and have eaten everything: some even perforate lead and tinfoil. They have elaborated an armor with extraordinary resistance to impact, compression, chemical agents, and radiation. Some of them dig underground shelters that are meters deep. In the event of a nuclear catastrophe they would be the most likely candidates to succeed us.

On top of everything else, their technology is ingenious but rudimentary and instinctive; after the planet becomes theirs, many millions of years will pass before a beetle particularly loved by God, at the end of its calculations, will find written on a sheet of paper in letters of fire that energy is equal to mass multiplied by the square of the velocity of light. Until then the new kings of the world will live tranquilly, confining themselves to devouring one another and living as parasites among themselves.





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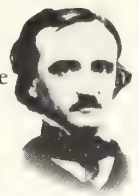
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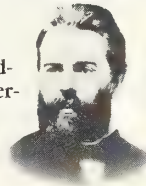


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[Diary Entries]

## A WRITER'S JOURNAL

From "Learning to Eat Soup," by Edward Hoagland, in the Autumn 1988 *Antaeus*, an issue devoted to writers' journals, notebooks, and diaries. Hoagland's most recent book is *Heart's Desire*, a collection of essays.

**L**earning to eat soup:  
Like little boats that go out to sea  
I push my spoon away from me.

To strike a balance is everything. If a person sings quietly to himself on the street people smile with approval; but if he talks it's not all right—they think he's crazy. The singer is presumed to be happy and the talker unhappy, which counts heavily against him. . . . To strike a balance: if, for example, walking in the woods, we flake off a bit of hangnail skin and an ant drags this bonanza away, we might say that the ants were feasting on human flesh; but probably wouldn't. On the other hand, if a man suffers a heart attack there and festers undiscovered, then we would.

If two people are in love they can sleep on the blade of a knife.

I ride my stutter, posting over its jolts, swerving with it, guiding it, if never "mastering" it.

At 6 A.M. I shoot a porcupine in the garage (knew about it from seeing Bimbo vomit from a fear reaction after his many tangles with porcupines). It goes under the building to die but not too far for a rake to reach. I take it to Paul Brooks's house. In his freezer he has woodchuck, beaver, bear, deer, bobcat, and porcupine meat (he is a man living only on Social Security), and he cleans it for me. We see it's a mamma with milk in her breasts. His mouth fills with saliva as he works; he's also preparing a venison roast for lunch with garlic salt, Worcestershire sauce, pepper, onions, etc. Says this time of year, first of June, the woodchucks are light as your hat, the winter has been so long for them; you can feel their thin legs. Porcupine liver is a delicacy, the rest not so much. The porcupine had been chewing at my garage; I eat the porcupine, therefore I'm eating my garage—dark drumsticks that night by kerosene lamp. Game tastes herby even without herbs—best is bobcat and muskrat, in my experience, not counting big meats like moose. One countryman we know had his ashes scattered on his

muskrat pond. The porcupine had chattered its teeth and rattled its poor quiver of quills as I had approached with my gun. Was so waddly it could not even limp properly when badly wounded. Lay on its side gurgling, choking, and sighing like a man dying.

My first overtly sexual memory is of me on my knees in the hallway outside our fifth-grade classroom cleaning the floor, and Lucy Smith in a white blouse and black skirt standing above me, watching me.

My first memory is of being on a train derailed in a rainstorm in Nebraska one night when I was two—and of hearing, as we rode in a hay wagon toward the distant weak lights of a little station, that a boy my age had just choked to death from breathing mud. But maybe my first real memory emerged when my father was dying. I was thirty-five and I dreamt so incredibly vividly of being dandled and rocked and hugged by him, being only a few months old, giggling helplessly and happily.

Wife of F's uncle, to prevent him from going to work one morning when she preferred he stay home, set the alarm so that it seemed it was too late for him to make the train when he woke. But he did rush so terribly he got to the station, and there collapsed and died, and she, only twenty-seven, never remarried.

I like Easterners more than Westerners but Western geography more than Eastern geography; and I like the country more than the city, but I like city people more than country people.

Essays, the most conversational form, have naturally drawn me, who has a hard time speaking in ordinary terms.

Writers customarily write in the morning and try to make news, make love, or make friends in the afternoon. But, alas, I write all day long.

Petrarch, climbing Mount Ventoux in 1336, began the Renaissance by being the first learned man ever to climb a mountain only for the view.

People who marry their great loves sometimes wish they'd married their best friends, and vice versa.

Trapeze artists complain "there's too much gravity" on days when a change of the weather or the magnetic field affects their bodies. Elvin Bale bought his heel-hook act from Geraldine Soules, who after a fall started doing a dog act



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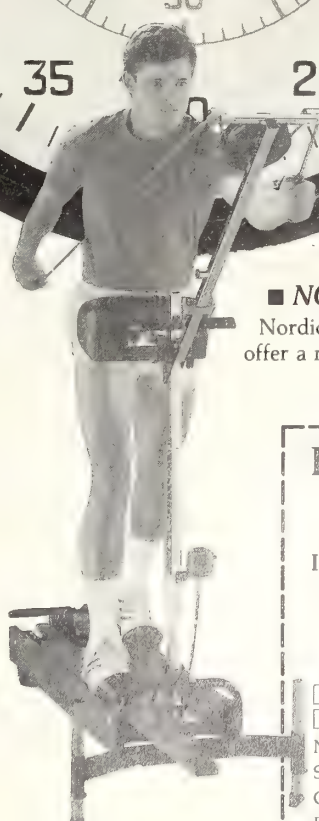
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instead. Soules had, in turn, bought it from Vander Barbette, who, walking funny after his fall, had become a female impersonator and trainer of circus showgirls.

The fifties are an interim decade of life, like the thirties. In the thirties one still has the energy of one's twenties, combined with the judgment (sometimes) of the forties. In the fifties one still has the energy of one's forties, combined with the composure of the sixties.

Nature writers, I sometimes think, are second only to cookbook writers in being screwed up.

A mother whale's milk would stain the sea after she was harpooned, and the calf would circle the ship forlornly. "I do not say that John or Jonathan will realize all this," said Thoreau, in finishing *Walden*; and that's the central and tragic dilemma as the environmentalist movement fights its rearguard battles.

In starving midwinter, foxes catch cats by rolling on their backs like a kitten ready to play.

My bifocals are like a horse's halter, binding the lower half of my eyes to the day's work.

Buying a new car after thirteen years, I discover why country people like to keep the old one about the yard. First, it makes the house look occupied. Second, it's a nesting site for ducks and geese and a shelter for chickens during the day. Third, it reminds you of *you*.

[Story]

## TO DIE FOR ONE'S COUNTRY IS GLORIOUS

By Danilo Kiš. From *The Encyclopedia of the Dead*, a collection of Kiš's stories that Farrar, Straus and Giroux will publish in March. Kiš was born in Subotica, Yugoslavia, and lives in Belgrade and Paris. In a postscript he writes that "To Die for One's Country Is Glorious" is "a free reworking of a late bourgeois legend." The volume was translated from the Serbian by Michael Henry Heim.

When, at dawn on that April day, the day set by imperial decree for his execution, the guards entered his cell, the young Esterházy was kneeling on the floor, his hands tightly clasped in prayer. His head was bent low and his light

hair fell to either side, revealing a long thin neck and jagged backbone that disappeared under a collarless linen shirt. The guards paused, considering a count's conversation with God sufficient reason to disregard, for a moment, the strict rules of Spanish ritual. The priest also shrank back, mutely clenching the hands he had brought together in prayer. His palms were sweaty and had left a telltale stain on the ivory covers of the breviary; his rosary, its beads the size of olives, swung silently. The only sound came from an enormous ring of keys that was held by one of the guards and clanked two or three times, unrhymically.

"Amen," the young man whispered, coming to the end of his morning prayer. Then he added, out loud, "Forgive me, my Father."

At that moment, as if by command, the drums began to beat, ominous, and monotonous like rain.

A ruddy-faced, bushy-mustached hussar officer framed by the long rifles of two Croatian uh-lans, one on each side, started reading out the sentence. He had a hoarse voice that echoed through the cell with a hollow ring. The sentence was harsh and implacable: death by hanging. The young nobleman, weapon in hand, had taken part in one of the mass uprisings—sudden and unforeseen, bloody, brutal, and hopeless—that shook the empire from time to time, only to be just as suddenly, brutally, and hopelessly crushed. His origins and the eminence of his line had been treated by the court as aggravating circumstances, as a betrayal not only of the monarch but also of his own caste. The punishment was meant to set an example.

The condemned man could scarcely make out a word among the string of monotonous syllables throbbing in his ears like so many drumbeats. Time had stopped. Past, present, and future had merged, the drums beat on, and his temples, like a frantic pulse, pounded with the far-off sounds of victorious assaults and battles, triumphal processions, and with the beating of other drums, drums draped in black, no longer announcing his death but the death of another. His youth notwithstanding (he looked more like a boy too tall for his age than a mature young man), he had seen blood flow and come face-to-face with death, though never yet at such close range. And the very proximity of death, the sensation of it breathing on his bare neck, distorted the view of reality reaching his consciousness, just as for an astigmatic the proximity of an object serves only to make it appear more misshapen. All that mattered to him—because what his world valued most besides an honorable life was an honorable death—was to preserve the dignity required of an Esterházy at such a moment.



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He had spent the night awake but with his eyes shut and without so much as a sigh, so that the guard, whose eye was glued to the peephole, might testify that the condemned man had slept soundly, as if he were going to the altar rather than to his death. And, in a strange inversion of time, he could *already* hear the guard telling the officers' mess, "Gentlemen, the young Esterházy slept quite soundly that night, without so much as a sigh, as if going to his wedding rather than to his hanging. I give you my word as an officer! Gentlemen, let us render him his due!" After which was heard—he heard—the crystal ping of glasses. "Bottoms up!"

The thrill of death, the victory of self-control had not left him all morning. He maintained his composure through prayer, gritting his teeth to resist the cowardly behavior of his intestines and solar plexus, those traitors to will and determination; he steeled his manhood by recourse to family legend. Thus it was that when, in accordance with compassionate protocol, he was vouchsafed a last request, he did not ask for a glass of water, though his insides were on fire; he asked for a cigarette, like an ancestor who had once, long before, requested a pinch of tobacco, which he had then chewed and spit in the face of his executioner.

The officer clicked his heels and offered him his silver cigarette case. ("Gentlemen, I give you my word as an officer. His hand did not tremble any more than mine trembles now as I hold this glass. Bottoms up!") In the rays of the early morning sun, which cut diagonally across the cell as across the cells of saints in old paintings, the cigarette smoke rose purple like the dawn. The condemned man sensed that the smoke, a resplendent illusion, had momentarily sapped his strength, broken him, as if he had heard the sound of a flageolet pouring out over a distant plain, and he quickly tossed the cigarette to the floor and crushed it with a spurless hussar boot.

"Gentlemen, I am ready."

Chosen for its military starkness, as brief as a command, as bare as an unsheathed saber, and as cold, the phrase was meant to be pronounced like a password, without emotion, as one says "Good night, gentlemen" at the end of a drinking bout. But now he felt it did not sound at all worthy of history. His voice was pure and sonorous, the syllables distinct, the sentence straightforward but a bit flaccid and cracked somehow.

Since the day his mother visited him he had realized that despite a wild hope, wild and secret, his life was henceforth no more than a tragic farce written by people nearly as powerful as gods.

She had stood before him, portly, strong,

with a veil over her face, filling the cell with her being, her person, her character, her enormous plumed hat, and her skirts, which swished though she made not the slightest movement. She refused the simple prison stool proffered by the uhlands, who thereby accorded her an honor they had surely never accorded anyone else there; she pretended not to notice them placing the simple wooden seat, appallingly simple beside her silk flounces, next to her. She thus remained standing throughout her visit. She spoke to him in French, so as to rattle the hussar officer stationed off to one side at an appropriate distance, his sword across the left shoulder in what was more an honor guard's salute to the aristocrat (whose nobility was as ancient as that of the Emperor himself) than a precaution or threat to the proud woman visiting the imperial prison.

"I shall throw myself at his feet," she whispered.

"I am ready to die, Mother," he said.

She cut him off with a stern, perhaps too stern, "Mon fils, reprenez courage!"

Then for the first time she turned her head slightly in the direction of the guard. Her voice, still no more than a whisper, fused with the whisper of her flounces. "I shall be standing on the balcony," she said, all but inaudibly. "If I am in white, it means that I have succeeded in..."

"Otherwise you will be in black, I presume," he said.

He was torn from his lethargy by the drums, which had started beating again, nearer now it seemed, and he realized, from the sudden animation of a scene which had theretofore stood immobile before him in a kind of mute permanence, that the reading of the sentence was over: the officer rolled up the scroll; the priest leaned over him and blessed him with the sign of the cross; the guards took hold of his arms. He did not allow the two uhlands to lift him, but rose lightly to his feet, barely supported by them. Then, even before he had crossed the threshold of the cell, he experienced a sudden feeling of certainty—appearing first in his breast, then suffusing his entire body—that it would all end as the logic of life demanded. Because everything was now arrayed against death, everything in the nightmare stood on the side of life: his youth, his origins, his family's eminence, his mother's love, the Emperor's mercy, and the very sun streaming down on him as he stepped into the carriage, his arms bound behind his back as if he were a common criminal.

But that lasted only for a moment, only until the carriage reached the boulevard where a boisterous mob, gathered from all over the empire, stood waiting for him. Through the intermit-





colic, by Rhonda Zwillinger. From an exhibit of her work held last fall at New York City's Gracie Mansion Gallery. Colic is an oil painting on wood in a frame of semi-precious stones and glass beads.

tent drumrolls he heard the buzz of the crowd, its threatening murmur; he saw fists raised in hate. The crowd was cheering imperial justice, because the mob always cheers the victor. That realization crushed him. His head sank a bit on his chest, his shoulders drew slightly together as if warding off blows (a stone or two was hurled at him), his back bent a little more. But the difference was enough for the rabble to sense that his courage had left him and his pride was shattered; it elicited cheers of something akin to jubilation. (Because the mob loves to see the proud and the brave brought low.)

When he came to the head of the boulevard, where the residences of the nobility began and the crowd thinned out a bit, he raised his eyes. In the light of the morning sun he glimpsed a blinding white spot on the balcony. Leaning over the railing, all in white, stood his mother, and behind her—as if to enhance the lily-white brilliance of her dress—the enormous dark green leaves of a philodendron. (He knew that dress well: it was an heirloom; one of his ancestors had worn it to an imperial wedding.)

Immediately, almost insolently, he straightened up, wishing to make it clear to the threatening mob that an Esterházy could not die just like that, that he could not be hanged like some highwayman.

And thus he stood beneath the gallows. Even as the hangman removed the stool from under his feet, he awaited the miracle. Then his body twisted at the end of the rope and his eyes bulged out of their sockets, as if he had just seen something awful and terrifying.

"I stood only a few paces away from him, gentlemen," the hussar with the bushy mustache told his fellow officers at mess that evening. "When the rope went down over his neck, he watched the hangman's hands as calmly as if they were tying a brocade scarf for him . . . I give you my word as an officer, gentlemen!"

There are two possible conclusions. Either the young aristocrat died a brave and noble death, fully conscious of the certainty thereof, his head held high, or the whole thing was merely a clever bit of playacting directed by a proud mother. The first, heroic, version was upheld and promulgated—orally, and then in writing, in their chronicles—by the sans-culottes and Jacobins; the second, according to which the young man hoped to the very end for some magical sleight of hand, was recorded by the official historians of the powerful Habsburg dynasty to prevent the birth of a legend. History is written by the victors. Legends are woven by the people. Writers fantasize. Only death is certain.

[Monologue]

## THE SEX LIFE

By David Cale. From *The Redthroats*, a collection of monologues published by Vintage. This piece will appear in Cale's show, *Smooch Music*, which will be performed in Minneapolis and Chicago this winter. Cale was born in England and now lives in New York City.

When I was a kid. When no one was in the house. I would go over to the cupboard under the stairs and take out the vacuum cleaner. Plus all the attachments. I'd plug the vacuum cleaner into the wall. Attach the long metal tube to it. The one you add all the attachments to. Then I'd place the tube's hole against my neck. Switch the vacuum cleaner on with my foot. Hold the tube so it sucked my neck for about ten minutes. Then I'd change sides and repeat the whole operation. Then I would put the vacuum cleaner and the attachments back under the stairs. Go over to the mirror. And sure enough I'd have hickeys. Or lovebites as we used to call them. Then I would go out and meet my friends and pretend nothing had happened. Pretty soon they'd notice the marks on my neck and they'd say, "He's had sex again! How does he do it? What's his secret?" And I'd give them a knowing look and not say anything.

Then we'd go and look at the *H & E* magazines. *H & E* was this magazine specially for nudists. The *H & E* part stood for Health and Efficiency. It was full of pictures of nude families playing volleyball. In special camps where people who didn't want to wear clothes could go and just take them off. There'd be a sentence under each photograph: "Here's Christopher. Age 6. Nude. Playing gin rummy with his Aunt Trixie. Age 47. Two people enjoying their nudity." Nude aunts. Nude uncles. Nude nephews. Nude nieces. All these nude grandmothers sitting round campfires eating chickens.

You didn't have to be a certain age to buy *H & E* because it was officially a health magazine. Anyone could buy it. The only trouble was most of the people in *H & E* were really overweight. They'd have big bellies that would hang low, so you couldn't really see anything.

Sometimes Kevin White would come and look at the *H & E*'s. Kevin White lived up the street. He was always trying to get me to do things. After a lot of persuasion Kevin convinced me that if I showed him mine he would show me his. This all happened behind the shed. Well it was a big success. So we started exposing ourselves to each other on a regular basis. Then I don't know what happened. It must have started to be too much for him 'cause after

a while Kevin started playing hard to get. That ended that.

Then one day I was riding my bike in the countryside. I saw this package in a ditch. I jumped down and pulled it open. It was full of magazines. Nude magazines. Real nude magazines. Not the *H & E* kind. All the magazines had their covers torn off. The women in the pictures looked really mean. Most of them had their tongues sticking out. There was a page where readers could send in photos of their wives and the magazine would print them. It was really peculiar. All the wives were wearing boots and holding bullwhips. There was another section called "Erotic Tips: What You Can Do With Eggs."

It had instructions:

Lie in an empty bath.  
Take a dozen raw eggs.  
Crack the eggs over your body.  
Then rub them in.  
—A delightful erotic experience.

Suddenly this car started coming toward me. I was convinced it was the people who owned the magazines coming to get them back. Panic set in. I got back on my bike and sped off.

When I got home no one was in. I couldn't get my mind off the eggs. So I went to the refrigerator to see if we had any. We did. There were three dozen. At first I thought, "How many eggs can I take without anyone noticing that any are gone?" Then I must have forgotten about that because I ended up taking all of them up to the bathroom. I took off all my clothes and climbed into the empty bath. It was really cold against my back. Took a long time getting used to it. Then I started cracking the eggs over my body. They looked awful. The yolks were breaking and sliding off me. But nothing was happening. No delightful erotic experience. So I started in on the second carton. Then the third. By this point I was about six inches deep in eggs. Every time I moved a wave of eggs would wash up over my chest.

I was rubbing them in when something started to happen. So I kept rubbing them in. The eggs were splashing everywhere. Sloshing over the side of the bath. There were eggs up the wall. I got egg in my eye. But something was happening. Maybe I was having it. A delightful erotic experience. There were eggs everywhere. I didn't care.

Something was happening.  
Something was definitely happening.  
Something was happening.  
Something was definitely happening.  
Something was happening.  
Something was definitely happening.

Then I realized, *this must be what all the fuss is about!*



# TALK OF THE TIMES

**I**n the English-speaking world the theatergoing public tends to approach the stage in much the same way that a doctor looks at an emergency ward. Audiences in New York and London, for at least a generation, have been routinely pronouncing true theater all but expired, and the art of writing plays so moribund that it is barely distinguishable from vaudeville or grand opera. It is customary to attribute this state of crisis to the triumph of spectacle over dialogue. Characters don't *talk* anymore; they fly, or roller-skate, or cross-dress, or purr.

And yet, against all odds, enough vigorous dialogue is heard on the stage each season to sustain the hope of a recovery. Theater remains the place where artists reveal through conversation the shape of our sensibilities. *Harper's Magazine* has selected passages from new works by three playwrights—David Hare, David Mamet, and Harold Pinter—evidence that the art of dialogue is still alive and well. These short pieces present different kinds of conversation—at home, in isolation, and before authority.

**DAVID HARE** is the author of the plays *Plenty* and *A Map of the World*. His most recent work, *The Secret Rapture*, premiered last October at the National Theatre in London and will open this fall at the Public Theater in New York City. The following scene takes place at the Glass family's country home. Isobel Glass, the owner of a small design firm, has come to discuss her sister Marion's proposition that the family invest in the firm. Also present are Tom, Marion's husband; Katherine, the sisters' recently widowed stepmother; Irwin, Isobel's boyfriend; and Rhonda, a friend. As the scene begins, there is the sound of distant gunfire.

## THE SECRET RAPTURE

IRWIN: Hello, my love. *(He kisses ISOBEL's cheek before going to sit down.)* Saturday afternoon. It's like the trenches out there. Bang! Bang! Bang! What is it about country people? They want to kill everything that moves.  
*(KATHERINE looks up.)*

KATHERINE: Irwin's back. Are we ready for the meeting?

MARION: Let's get Tom.

*(She nods at RHONDA, who at once leaves the room on her errand.)*

IRWIN: We don't do it in London. We don't say, "Great, let's go out and shoot some cats. That would be fun. Murder some dogs for exercise."  
*(RHONDA sweeps back into the room.)*

RHONDA: He's coming.

IRWIN: Outside the cities England seems to be one big rifle range.

*(At once another explosion of gunfire and TOM comes in, carrying a black briefcase, which he is opening on the way.)*

TOM: Right, everyone, I have the proposal in here.  
*(ISOBEL smiles, trying to make a joke of how brisk everyone has suddenly become.)*

ISOBEL: Oh, Lord.

TOM: Are we ready?

RHONDA: Should I go?

MARION: No, of course not.

*(TOM has already walked over to ISOBEL and handed her papers.)*

TOM: This is the form. You would sign this.

ISOBEL: Thank you.

TOM: And this. Incorporation. Transfer of title.

*(MARION has walked across from the other side and is already offering a Mont Blanc.)*

MARION: Pen?

ISOBEL: Thank you.

*(ISOBEL looks round. The whole room is suddenly waiting for her: KATHERINE in her chair, book on knee, RHONDA leaning against the bare wall, IRWIN looking at his gumboots, TOM and MARION standing on opposite sides of the room.)*

TOM: Please go ahead. Ask anything you like.

*(ISOBEL smiles, embarrassed, trying to keep the atmosphere light. In the distance the guns fire again.)*

ISOBEL: Well, I mean, you know I've already hinted, I don't mean to be difficult, it's just Irwin and I... *(She turns to him.)* Do you want to speak first?

*(IRWIN shakes his head.)*

We both feel... I don't know how to say it... what you're suggesting is a very big step.

TOM: It's a big step for us.

ISOBEL: Of course.

TOM: My company has the spare money. We want to use it. We want to help your firm expand. Because, well, our motives are wonderful. We happen to believe in you.

ISOBEL: Yes, well, that's jolly good. It's just... the form of the arrangement.

MARION: Isobel's worried about the idea of a board.

*(TOM frowns.)*

TOM: Oh, I see.

MARION: She's used to owning her own firm.

TOM: Yes, but surely you'd expect us to protect our investment?

*(He stands for a moment, genuinely puzzled.)*

I don't think there's anything sinister in that.

It's pretty normal practice.

ISOBEL: Your company would own us?

TOM: Well, yes, indirectly. They wouldn't interfere. After all you'd have a board of your own.

ISOBEL: Of which you'd be the chairman?

TOM: Technically.

ISOBEL: And of which I would simply be one single member?

*(TOM frowns again.)*

TOM: You'd also be managing director.

MARION: *(Firmly)* Isobel, Tom is president of Christians in Business. I think that makes it pretty clear he's a man you can trust.

*(ISOBEL turns at once, upset.)*

ISOBEL: Oh, God, yes, please, honestly, this mustn't be personal...

TOM: It isn't.

MARION: He's chairman of his church's Ethical Committee.

TOM: We meet six times a year. We try to do business the way Jesus would have done it.

ISOBEL: You mean, had he come to earth in a polyester suit and with two propelling pencils in his top pocket?

TOM: I'm sorry?

*(MARION looks angrily across the room.)*

MARION: Isobel's making a joke.

TOM: Oh, I see.

MARION: Tom is out there in the community. He runs all these schemes. For youth. Don't you, dear?

ISOBEL: Of course. Tom's honesty is not at issue.  
*(She stops a moment, having trouble now. She tries to speak quietly.)*

It's just I fear I'd be losing control.



(There's a short silence. The guns fire again. KATHERINE looks up, speaks quietly.)

KATHERINE: Isobel, you are the business. Everyone knows that. You are its asset. With all respect to Irwin. You are what makes it work. No one is going to replace you. (She shrugs.) The whole board thing is just a technicality.

(ISOBEL shakes her head, frustrated now, beginning to get angry.)

ISOBEL: Why don't you just give me the money?

MARION: I find that question unforgivably naive.

(Suddenly MARION has flared up, a sister reminded of old arguments.)

ISOBEL: Now look...

MARION: No, I...

ISOBEL: (Exasperated) Perhaps I don't want to get bigger.

MARION: Don't be ridiculous. Are you crazy? There's money to be made. Everyone's making it.

TOM: Remember, God gives us certain gifts.

MARION: Tom is right.

TOM: And he expects us to use them. That's our duty. If we fail to use them, he gets angry. Justifiably. God says to himself, "Now look, why did I give that person those gifts in the first place? If they're not willing to get out there and make a bit of an effort?"

ISOBEL: I am using them.

TOM: Yes. But not to the full.

(ISOBEL looks at him a moment, across a hopeless gulf.)

MARION: It's just the time. You must feel it. It's out there. It's the only thing I regret about belonging to the government. Unfortunately I've got to help drive the gravy train. I'd rather be clambering on the back and joining in the fun.

ISOBEL: What fun?

MARION: Making money.

KATHERINE: Darling, everyone is.

MARION: Please wake up.

(KATHERINE is suddenly animated.)

KATHERINE: You know I think this government's appalling. But on the other hand, let's face it, given what's going on, it's just stupid not to go and grab some dough for yourself.

MARION: It's more than stupid. It's irresponsible.

KATHERINE: I mean, give it to the good guys. That's my philosophy. If we don't make the money someone else will. Well, in my book the arseholes have had it their own way long enough. (ISOBEL smiles.)

ISOBEL: But isn't there a chance that taking some will turn us into arseholes?

(RHONDA laughs. KATHERINE smiles at her, compassionately.)

KATHERINE: Oh, Isobel...

ISOBEL: Well?

KATHERINE: I think I can live with that danger. Can't you?

(MARION is moving quietly to the far side of the room.)

MARION: If you don't take the money, then you insult us.

ISOBEL: Now, Marion, come on...

MARION: It's like saying you don't trust us.

ISOBEL: You know that's unfair. You mustn't say that.

MARION: I don't know how to interpret a refusal. You're saying you don't think your brother-in-law will look after your best interests. (MARION turns away, letting the accusation hang damagingly in the air.) I don't know. Perhaps that's what you feel.

ISOBEL: No.

(ISOBEL looks to IRWIN, desperate for help, but his eyes are still on his feet. The guns fire in the distance. Then MARION is very quiet.)

MARION: Also, you know, you must think of other people.

ISOBEL: I'm sorry? (She looks at her, not comprehending.) What?

MARION: I sometimes think, what sort of life is it if we only think about ourselves?

(ISOBEL looks round the room.)

ISOBEL: I'm sorry, Marion, you've lost me.

MARION: Katherine.

(She is looking across the room to where KATHER-



INE now has modestly folded her hands in her lap. ISOBEL is quite still.)

ISOBEL: Ah, yes.

MARION: That's who I mean. I don't know, it's difficult... Katherine, do you mind if I say?

KATHERINE: Go ahead.

MARION: One of the reasons Tom is so eager to put money in is to help Katherine through this very difficult time.

ISOBEL: I see.


MARION: To me, let's face it, what's the best thing to happen to this family? In many, many years? The way Katherine's coped with bereavement so

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magnificently.

(ISOBEL stands, her lips tight together.)

I don't think you'd deny her a seat on the board.

(There is a silence. ISOBEL goes slow, sensing a trap.)

ISOBEL: No. Well, of course not...

MARION: Would you?

ISOBEL: Don't be silly.

(KATHERINE is quite still.)

If the scheme goes ahead, of course, it's agreed, Katherine would be part of it.

MARION: Good. (She smiles to herself.) Tom and I love the idea of Katherine having a long-term directorship. It's just the kind of security she's lacked in her life. (She shrugs slightly.) I mean, again, it's your decision. Katherine won't mind. Will you, Katherine?

(KATHERINE shakes her head. ISOBEL turns now to IRWIN.)

ISOBEL: That leaves only one person. Irwin?

IRWIN: Yes?

ISOBEL: What you were saying last night.

(IRWIN looks up mildly from his boots.)

Irwin thinks it's folly to mix family and business.

IRWIN: I do think that. Normally, yes.

ISOBEL: What d'you mean, "normally"?

IRWIN: I don't know, I can see, I've been listening, it's all very tricky...

(He finally puts his boots decisively to one side.)

Let's face it, Isobel, we are a bit stuck. We do need capital...

ISOBEL: Irwin...

IRWIN: Tom is cash-rich. From making paper napkins. Or whatever he does.

(Tom smiles tolerantly.)

It seems you would be getting a great boost. As far as I can see, with very few strings. The best way—I was explaining this to Tom and Marion this morning—to get good work in our field is to leave people alone and allow them some breathing space. (He smiles confidently.) Tom agrees with this. So it's not in his own interest to interfere in any way. (MARION looks across the room, pleased.)

MARION: Also Irwin did mention, you don't mind my saying this...

IRWIN: What?

MARION: He did think perhaps you were hoping to get married.

ISOBEL: Married?

IRWIN: No!

ISOBEL: Did Irwin say that?

MARION: Irwin, you've landed me in it. Was that a confidence?

IRWIN: Isobel...

MARION: Now you're being coy.

IRWIN: I said no such thing. Honestly.

ISOBEL: Irwin, what have you been doing?

MARION: I can't really see what's so wrong with the idea.

ISOBEL: Please, Marion...

(MARION holds up a hand in surrender.)

MARION: All right, disregard marriage, forget I ever said it. Whatever. It doesn't matter. Marriage or not, we are proposing to double Irwin's salary.

ISOBEL: Double it?

MARION: Yes. We did tell Irwin that.

ISOBEL: Irwin, is this true?

(IRWIN shrugs and smiles, boyishly.)

IRWIN: They said it.

TOM: We rate him very highly.

ISOBEL: Yes. So do I.

(Her voice is very faint now. She seems dazed.)

MARION: It does seem absurd. I couldn't believe it.

Irwin says he doesn't even own his room in Kentish Town.

IRWIN: No, I don't.

MARION: At his age, really, Isobel, that is ridiculous. For an artist of his talent.

ISOBEL: Oh, yes.

(Now she is staring at IRWIN, her mind miles away, as if trying to work something out. MARION takes a few paces, almost talking to herself.)

MARION: If someone comes along, says, "Look, you'll do exactly the same job, in the same hours, in the same way, the only difference is, you'll be paid double..." (She smiles to herself.) You can't blame Irwin.

RHONDA: Why do people think it's smart to be poor?

(There's a silence, full of sadness. MARION frowns, surprised by RHONDA's sudden interruption. Then TOM breaks the mood, snapping his briefcase shut.)

TOM: I have to go. I've got a total immersion at six. Are you coming with me, darling?

MARION: Yes. Rhonda's coming as well. Let's make some tea. Katherine?

KATHERINE: Oh, yes.

(She gets up from her seat. TOM and RHONDA go first as MARION stops a moment at the door.)

MARION: Think about it anyway.

(She puts her arm around KATHERINE as they turn to go out. ISOBEL and IRWIN are left alone in the empty room. ISOBEL is turned away from him, he behind her.)

IRWIN: Isobel, please. Just look at me. Please.

(She doesn't turn.)

Things move on. You brought in Katherine. Be fair, it was you. It changed the nature of the firm. For better or worse. But it's changed. And you did it. Not me.

(There is silence.)

I wouldn't hurt you. You know that. I'd rather die than see you hurt. I love you. I want you. There's not a moment when I don't want you. (ISOBEL stands quite still, not turning. The sound of the guns.)

ISOBEL: The guns are getting nearer. God, will nobody leave us in peace?

(The lights fade.)



**DAVID MAMET** is a playwright whose work includes *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, *American Buffalo*, *Speed-the-Plow*, and *Glen-garry Glen Ross*, which won a Pulitzer Prize. He has recently completed a pilot for a television series called *Bradford* and a screenplay for a film entitled *We're No Angels*.

## DODGE

OLD MAN: The reason that they had those, you would say, "nicknames": man came into town you didn't ask him where he's from, you didn't ask him...

YOUNG MAN: What his name was.

OLD MAN: That's right. You did not. And so, you would say, a culture sprung up of the custom to assign a man a name based on some aspect of, well, let's say his *behavior*. So they, what they would do, you see, that in itself would reinforce the thing that what's important in a man is the way he comports himself.

A man once wrote that in countries where the populace is armed people tend to be more polite. I think that's true, and you may say it is a ruse, or Southern Honor is a pleasant fiction, but I've found it true—and, past a point, people *do* act the way they've learned is expected of them. So there's some good in it in any case. Now: men who fall afoul of the law. Some men seek for that; perhaps you'd say by birth, by training, by inclination—but however it is so, and there are bad men in the world, though it pains me to say it, and I did not always hold it true. How does one deal with them?

They must be dealt with strongly.

First thing is to know them, and one can shun them without the taint of cowardice, as one would shun a pest, or predator. For one could deal with them, but why seek trouble if one has the choice? If you must go, then be direct. For bad men will interpret courtesy as weakness. When your paths cross, make it clear you do not intend to be trifled with, and brook no disrespect, if he is going to erupt, as he will, let him take himself off and do it elsewhere.

For the man who says it's his responsibility to cleanse the blot the bad man represents, that man's a bully, too, and a self-righteous one. And I've an example of *that* which I will tell you later.

In countries where the men are armed, the saying is it's better to be judged by twelve than carried by six. So from the moment when you *decide* to go for your gun do not hesitate until your man is dead.

In Dodge there lived a man whom we called Mike, or Pennsylvania Mike, although he did not come from that state, or we had no reason to believe he did—for this is how those names

arose. He'd done something... (Pause) No, I tell a lie: Keystone Mike. *Keystone*, for... for, yessir! He'd sat down, there was a poker game at some, at, it escapes me, some resort, each day at one o'clock they would sit down, this man played in that game, he was a regular. One day, the players were short, this man had absented himself, and there were only three, which is a languid game, to while away the hours, for, hand by hand, it is always two on one, two against one, one way or the other. And Mike was a high-player and so a favorite. So this day he was absent and the game dragged. When he, when he made his entrance, he pulled up his chair to that three-handed contest and the dealer said, "Here is the keystone of our game." (Pause)... here is the keystone of our game. So



"Keystone Mike." And, jocularly, once in a while, perhaps, "Keys," and so I must suppose, *although* I misremembered it, for his name was "Keystone," that one might have referred to the man, with that passion which we all possess for elaboration, as "Pennsylvania."

He lived in Dodge in that time I'm referring to, when it was Railhead for the Cattle Drive, or as I've read in books, although I cannot remember hearing it called so, "The End of Steel." Who could of called it that?

Near 80,000 head of cattle for transshipment, in Dodge, quite a lot of money. As I said, he was the Keystone, wore a fob on his waist of a .45 Long Colt, you know they say the *Indians*, their pagan, what we might call "medicine," which we take to mean their "religion," one aspect, a sort of magazine they carried of those things, those things that had *affected* them. In dreams, or visions: in their lives. They wore a medicine bag, and it contained beads, say, or the hoof of a doe, a shell, hair of a vanquished adversary—in those times gone by—things that both had meaning in their eyes and supernatural weight.

And we might say "benighted as Egyptians in their fog," but working through my own pockets I'd find, I'd find, in my own pockets I would find, a Walking Liberty half-dollar, the shell of a .32 Long Colt... and there's a story to those things. (Pause)

YOUNG MAN: You said a most peculiar thing.

OLD MAN: I?

YOUNG MAN: In his pocket.

OLD MAN: When he died...

YOUNG MAN: You were speaking of totems.

OLD MAN: It has fascinated me, how things arrive in books. Misinformation. Fellow knows the way it's done, community, man comes in, one day, part of a day, writes a book, you understand me? Which traduces that...

YOUNG MAN: ... knowledge.

OLD MAN: That knowledge, yes. And then ... (Pause) And then... you find it in a book, it's not, you see, it's like a gunfight, one man walks away, the book becomes the record. After men have died. For the men... (Pause) The men... (Pause)

YOUNG MAN: ... the men are dead.

OLD MAN: And it is foolish to rail, at the way of the world. (Pause) At the way of gods, for, certainly, there are things, are meant to be lost. For if they weren't meant to be lost why are they so?

And that man wasn't worse, some worse, I'll say it, much worse than the rest of us? No. I'll say "No."

YOUNG MAN: And he had in his pocket?

OLD MAN: The story is this: a woman he'd once insulted. Threw a flowerpot at him—he's seated, with his back to her. He rose to turn and drew his gun. The chair skid under him, he went down. And he shot himself. And died. Inside his pocket, in the pocket of his vest, were found ivory baby beads, on which the name was written "Clement." What a marvelous country!

**HAROLD PINTER** is best known for his plays *The Birthday Party* and *The Homecoming*. *Mountain Language*, his most recent work, premiered last October at London's National Theatre. The play will be published in the United States this March by Grove Press.

## MOUNTAIN LANGUAGE

### I. A PRISON WALL

(A line of women. ELDERLY WOMAN is cradling her hand, a basket at her feet. YOUNG WOMAN has her arm around the other woman's shoulders. SER-

GEANT enters, followed by OFFICER. SERGEANT points to YOUNG WOMAN.)

SERGEANT: Name?

YOUNG WOMAN: We've given our names.

SERGEANT: Name?

YOUNG WOMAN: We've given our names.

SERGEANT: Name?

OFFICER: (to SERGEANT) Stop this shit. (to YOUNG WOMAN) Any complaints?



YOUNG WOMAN: She's been bitten.

OFFICER: Who?

(Pause)

Who? Who's been bitten?

YOUNG WOMAN: She has. She has a torn hand.

Look. Her hand has been bitten. This is blood.

SERGEANT: (to YOUNG WOMAN) What is your name?

OFFICER: Shut up. (He walks over to ELDERLY WOMAN.) What's happened to your hand? Has someone bitten your hand?

(The woman slowly lifts her hand. He peers at it.)

OFFICER: Who did this? Who bit you?

YOUNG WOMAN: A Dobermann pinscher.

OFFICER: Which one?

(Pause)

Which one?

(Pause)

Sergeant!

(SERGEANT steps forward.)

SERGEANT: Sir!

OFFICER: Look at this woman's hand. I think the thumb is going to come off. (to ELDERLY WOMAN) Who did this?

(She stares at him.)

Who did this?

YOUNG WOMAN: A big dog.

OFFICER: What was his name?

(Pause)

What was his name?

(Pause)

Every dog has a name! They answer to their



name. They are given a name by their parents and that is their name, that is their *name*! Before they bite they *state* their name. It's a formal procedure. They state their name and then they bite. What was his name? If you tell me one of our dogs bit this woman without giving his name I will have that dog shot!

(Silence)

Now—attention! Silence and attention! Sergeant!

SERGEANT: Sir?

OFFICER: Take any complaints.

SERGEANT: Any complaints? Has anyone got any complaints?

YOUNG WOMAN: We were told to be here at nine o'clock this morning.

SERGEANT: Right. Quite right. Nine o'clock this morning. Absolutely right. What's your complaint?

YOUNG WOMAN: We were here at nine o'clock this morning. It's now five o'clock. We have been standing here for eight hours. In the snow. Your men let Dobermann pinschers frighten us. One bit this woman's hand.

OFFICER: What was the name of this dog?

(She looks at him.)

YOUNG WOMAN: I don't know his name.

SERGEANT: With permission, sir?

OFFICER: Go ahead.

SERGEANT: Your husbands, your sons, your fathers, these men you have been waiting to see, are shithouses. They are enemies of the State. They are shithouses.

(OFFICER steps toward the women.)

OFFICER: Now hear this. You are mountain people. You hear me? Your language is dead. It is forbidden. It is not permitted to speak your mountain language in this place. You cannot speak your language to your men. It is not permitted. Do you understand? It is outlawed. You may only speak the language of the capital. That is the only language permitted in this place. You will be badly punished if you attempt to speak your mountain language in this place. This is a military decree. It is the law. Your language is forbidden. It is dead. No one is allowed to speak your language. Your language no longer exists. Any questions?

YOUNG WOMAN: I do not speak the mountain language.

(Silence. OFFICER and SERGEANT slowly circle her.

SERGEANT puts his hand on her bottom.)

SERGEANT: What language do you speak? What language do you speak with your arse?

OFFICER: These women, Sergeant, have as yet committed no crime. Remember that.

SERGEANT: Sir! But you're not saying they're without sin?

OFFICER: Oh, no. Oh, no, I'm not saying that.

SERGEANT: This one's full of it. She bounces

with it.

OFFICER: She doesn't speak the mountain language.

(YOUNG WOMAN moves away from SERGEANT's hand and turns to face the two men.)

YOUNG WOMAN: My name is Sara Johnson. I have come to see my husband. It is my right. Where is he?

OFFICER: Show me your papers.

(She gives him a piece of paper. He examines it, turns to SERGEANT.)

He doesn't come from the mountains. He's in the wrong batch.

SERGEANT: So is she. She looks like a fucking intellectual to me.

OFFICER: But you said her arse wobbled.

SERGEANT: Intellectual arses wobble the best.

(Blackout)

## II. VISITORS ROOM

(PRISONER sitting. ELDERLY WOMAN sitting, with basket. GUARD standing behind her. PRISONER and ELDERLY WOMAN speak in a strong rural accent.)

(Silence)

ELDERLY WOMAN: I have bread—

(GUARD jabs her with a stick.)

GUARD: Forbidden. Language forbidden.

(She looks at him. He jabs her.)

It's forbidden. (to PRISONER) Tell her to speak the language of the capital.

PRISONER: She can't speak it.

(Silence)

She doesn't speak it.

(Silence)

ELDERLY WOMAN: I have apples—

(GUARD jabs her and shouts.)

GUARD: Forbidden! Forbidden forbidden forbidden! Jesus Christ! (to PRISONER) Does she understand what I'm saying?

PRISONER: No.

GUARD: Doesn't she?

(He bends over her.)

Don't you?

(She stares up at him.)

PRISONER: She's old. She doesn't understand.

GUARD: Whose fault is that?

(He laughs.)

Not mine, I can tell you. And I'll tell you another thing. I've got a wife and three kids. And you're all a pile of shit.

(Silence)

PRISONER: I've got a wife and three kids.

GUARD: You've what?

(Silence)

You've got what?

(Silence)

What did you say to me? You've got what?

(Silence)

You've got what?

(He picks up the telephone and dials one digit.)

Sergeant? I'm in the Blue Room... Yes...

I thought I should report, Sergeant... I think I've got a joker in here.

(Lights to half. The figures are still. Voices over.)

ELDERLY WOMAN'S VOICE: The baby is waiting for you.

PRISONER'S VOICE: Your hand has been bitten.

ELDERLY WOMAN'S VOICE: They are all waiting for you.

PRISONER'S VOICE: They have bitten my mother's hand.

ELDERLY WOMAN'S VOICE: When you come home there will be such a welcome for you. Everyone is waiting for you. They're all waiting for you. They're all waiting to see you.

(Lights up. SERGEANT comes in.)

SERGEANT: What joker?

(Blackout)

### III. VOICE IN THE DARKNESS

SERGEANT'S VOICE: Who's that fucking woman? What's that fucking woman doing here? Who let that fucking woman through that fucking door?

SECOND GUARD'S VOICE: She's his wife.

(Lights up: corridor)

(HOODED MAN held up by GUARD and SERGEANT. YOUNG WOMAN stands at a distance from them, staring at them.)

SERGEANT: What is this, a reception for Lady Duck Muck? Where's the bloody Babycham? Who's got the bloody Babycham for Lady Duck Muck? (He goes to YOUNG WOMAN.)

Hello, Miss. Sorry. A bit of a breakdown in administration, I'm afraid. They've sent you through the wrong door. Unbelievable. Someone'll be done for this. Anyway, in the meantime, what can I do for you, dear lady, as they used to say in the movies?

(Lights to half. The figures are still. Voices over.)

MAN'S VOICE: I watch you sleep. And then your eyes open. You look up at me above you and smile.

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE: You smile. When my eyes open I see you above me and smile.

MAN'S VOICE: We are out on a lake.

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE: It is spring.

MAN'S VOICE: I hold you. I warm you.

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE: When my eyes open I see you above me and smile.

(Lights up. HOODED MAN collapses. YOUNG WOMAN screams.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Charley!

(SERGEANT clicks his fingers. GUARD drags the man off.)

SERGEANT: Yes, you've come in the wrong door. It

must be the computer. The computer's got a double hernia. But I'll tell you what—if you want any information on any aspect of life in this place we've got a bloke comes into the office every Tuesday week, except when it rains. He's right on top of his chosen subject. Give him a tinkle one of these days and he'll see you all right. His name is Dokes. Joseph Dokes.

YOUNG WOMAN: Can I fuck him? If I fuck him, will everything be all right?

SERGEANT: Sure. No problem.

YOUNG WOMAN: Thank you.

(Blackout)

### IV. VISITORS ROOM

GUARD. ELDERLY WOMAN. PRISONER.

(Silence)

(PRISONER has blood on his face. He sits trembling. ELDERLY WOMAN is still. GUARD is looking out of a window. He turns to look at them both.)

GUARD: Oh, I forgot to tell you. They've changed the rules. She can speak. She can speak in her own language. Until further notice.

PRISONER: She can speak?

GUARD: Yes. Until further notice. New rules.

(Pause)

PRISONER: Mother, you can speak.

(Pause)

Mother, I'm speaking to you. You see? We can speak. You can speak to me in our own language.

(She is still.)

You can speak.

(Pause)

Mother. Can you hear me? I am speaking to you in our own language.

(Pause)

Do you hear me?

(Pause)

It's our language.

(Pause)

Can't you hear me? Do you hear me?

(She does not respond.)

Mother?

GUARD: Tell her she can speak in her own language. New rules. Until further notice.

PRISONER: Mother?

(She does not respond. She sits still.

PRISONER's trembling grows. He falls from the chair onto his knees, begins to gasp and shake violently.

SERGEANT walks into the room and studies PRISONER shaking on the floor.)

SERGEANT: (to GUARD) Look at this. You go out of your way to give them a helping hand and they fuck it up.

(Blackout)



# THE RECOLORING OF CAMPUS LIFE

Student racism, academic  
pluralism, and the end of a dream

By Shelby Steele

**I**n the past few years, we have witnessed what the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence calls a "proliferation" of racial incidents on college campuses around the country. Incidents of on-campus "intergroup conflict" have occurred at more than 160 colleges in the last three years, according to the institute. The nature of these incidents has ranged from open racial violence—most notoriously, the October 1986 beating of a black student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst after an argument about the World Series turned into a racial bashing, with a crowd of up to 3,000 whites chasing twenty blacks—to the harassment of minority students, to acts of racial or ethnic insensitivity, with by far the greatest number falling in the last two categories. At Dartmouth College, three editors of the *Dartmouth Review*, the off-campus right-wing student weekly, were suspended last winter for harassing a black professor in his lecture hall. At Yale University last year a swastika and the words "white power" were painted on the school's Afro-American cultural center. Racist jokes were aired not long ago on a campus radio station at the University of Michigan. And at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, members of the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity held a mock slave auction in which pledges painted their faces black and wore Afro wigs. Two weeks after the president of Stanford University informed the incoming freshman class last fall that "bigotry is out, and I mean it," two freshmen defaced a poster of Beethoven—gave the image thick lips—and hung it on a black student's door.

In response, black students around the country have rediscovered the militant protest strategies of the Sixties. At the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Williams College, Penn State University, UC Berkeley, UCLA, Stanford, and countless other campuses, black students have sat in, marched, and rallied. But much of what they were marching and rallying about seemed less a response to specific racial incidents than a call for broader action on the part of the colleges and universities they were attending. Black students have demanded everything from more black faculty members and new courses on racism to the addition of "ethnic" foods in the

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cafeteria. There is the sense in these demands that racism runs deep.

Of course, universities are not where racial problems tend to arise. When I went to college in the mid-Sixties, colleges were oases of calm and understanding in a racially tense society; campus life—with its traditions of tolerance and fairness, its very distance from the “real” world—imposed a degree of broad-mindedness on even the most provincial students. If I met whites who were not anxious to be friends with blacks, most were at least vaguely friendly to the cause of our freedom. In any case, there was no guerrilla activity against our presence, no “mine field of racism” (as one black student at Berkeley recently put it) to negotiate. I wouldn’t say that the phrase “campus racism” is a contradiction in terms, but until recently it certainly seemed an incongruence.

But a greater incongruence is the generational timing of this new problem on the campuses. Today’s undergraduates were born after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. They grew up in an age when racial equality was for the first time enforceable by law. This too was a time when blacks suddenly appeared on television, as mayors of big cities, as icons of popular culture, as teachers, and in some cases even as neighbors. Today’s black and white college students, veterans of *Sesame Street* and often of integrated grammar and high schools, have had more opportunities to know each other—whites and blacks—than any previous generation in American history. Not enough opportunities, perhaps, but enough to make the notion of racial tension on campus something of a mystery, at least to me.

To try to unravel this mystery I left my own campus, where there have been few signs of racial tension, and talked with black and white students at California schools where racial incidents had occurred: Stanford, UCLA, Berkeley. I spoke with black and white students—and not with Asians and Hispanics—because, as always, blacks and whites represent the deepest lines of division, and because I hesitate to wander onto the complex territory of other minority groups. A phrase by William H. Gass—“the hidden internality of things”—describes with maybe a little too much grandeur what I hoped to find. But it is what I wanted to find, for this is the kind of problem that makes a black person nervous, which is not to say that it doesn’t unnerve whites as well. Once every six months or so someone yells “nigger” at me from a passing car. I don’t like to think that these solo artists

might soon make up a chorus or, worse, that this chorus might one day soon sing to me from the paths of my own campus.

I have long believed that the trouble between the races is seldom what it appears to be.\* It was not hard to see after my first talks with students that racial tension on campus is a problem that misrepresents itself. It has the same look, the archetypal pattern, of America’s timeless racial conflict—white racism and black protest. And I think part of our concern over it comes from the fact that it has the feel of a relapse, illness gone and coming again. But if we are seeing the same symptoms, I don’t believe we are dealing with the same illness. For one thing, I think racial tension on campus is the result more of racial equality than inequality!

How to live with racial difference has been America’s profound social problem. For the first 100 years or so following emancipation it was controlled by a legally sanctioned inequality that acted as a buffer between the races. No longer is this the case. On campuses today, as throughout society, blacks enjoy equality under the law—a profound social advancement. No student may be kept out of a class or a dormitory or an extracurricular activity because of his or her race. But there is a paradox here: On a campus where members of all races are gathered, mixed together in the classroom as well as socially, differences are more exposed than ever. And this is

\* See my essay, “I’m Black, You’re White, Who’s Innocent? Race and Power in an Era of Blame,” *Harper’s Magazine*, June 1988.



ere the trouble starts. For members of each race—young adults coming to their own, often away from home for the first time—bring to this site freedom, exploration, and now, today, equality very deep fears and anxieties, inchoate feelings of racial shame, anger, and guilt. These feelings could lie dormant in the home, in familiar neighborhoods, in simpler settings of childhood. But the college campus, with its structures of interaction and adult-level competition—the big exam, the dorm, the “mixer”—is another matter. I think campus racism is born of the rub between racial difference and a setting, the campus itself, devoted to interaction and equality. On our campuses, such concentrated micro-societies, all that remains unresolved between blacks and whites, all the old wounds and memories that have never been addressed, present themselves for attention—and I present our youth with pressures they cannot always handle.

I have mentioned one paradox: racial fears and anxieties among blacks and whites bubbling up in an era of racial equality under the law, in settings that are among the freest and fairest in society. And there is another, related paradox, stemming from the notion of—and practice of—affirmative action. Under the provisions of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, all state governments and institutions (including universities) were required to initiate plans to increase the proportion of minority and women employees—in the case of universities, of students too. Affirmative action plans that establish racial quotas were ruled unconstitutional more than ten years ago in *University of California Regents v. Bakke*. But quotas are only the most controversial aspect of affirmative action; the principle of affirmative action is reflected in various university programs aimed at redressing and overcoming past patterns of discrimination. Of course, to be conscious of the terms of discrimination—the fact, say, that public schools in the black inner cities are more crowded and employ fewer top-notch teachers than white suburban public schools, and that this is a factor in student performance—is only reasonable. However, in doing this we also call attention to difference obviously to difference: in the case of blacks and whites, racial difference. What has emerged on campus in recent years—as a result of the new equality and affirmative action, in a sense, as a result of progress—is a *politics of difference*, a troubling, volatile politics in which each group justifies itself, its sense of worth and its pursuit of power, through difference alone. In this context, racial, ethnic, and gender differences become forms of sovereignty, campuses become balkanized, and each group fights with whatever means are available. No doubt there are many factors that have contributed to the rise of racial tension on campus: What has been the role of fraternities, which have returned to campus with their inclusions and exclusions? What role has the heightened notion of college as some first step to personal, financial success played in increasing competition, and thus tension? Mostly what I sense, though, is that in interactive settings, while fighting the fights of “difference,” old ghosts are stirred, and haunt again. Black and white Americans simply have the power to make each other feel shame and guilt. In the “real” world, we may be able to deny these feelings, keep them at bay. But these feelings are likely to surface on college campuses, where young people are groping for identity and power, and where difference is made to matter so greatly. In a way, racial tension on campus in the Eighties might have been inevitable.

I would like, first, to discuss black students, their anxieties and vulnerabilities. The accusation that black Americans have always lived with is that they are inferior—inferior simply because they are black. And this accusation has been too uniform, too ingrained in cultural imagery, too forced by law, custom, and every form of power not to have left a mark. Black inferiority was a precept accepted by the founders of this nation; it is a principle of social organization that relegated blacks to the sidelines of American life. So when today’s young black students find themselves on

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white campuses, surrounded by those who historically have claimed superiority, they are also surrounded by the myth of their inferiority.

Of course it is true that many young people come to college with some anxiety about not being good enough. But only blacks come wearing a color that is still, in the minds of some, a sign of inferiority. Poles, Jews, Hispanics, and other groups also endure degrading stereotypes. But two things make the myth of black inferiority a far heavier burden—the broadness of its scope and its incarnation in color. There are not only more stereotypes of blacks than of other groups, but these stereotypes are also more dehumanizing, more focused on the most despised of human traits—stupidity, laziness, sexual immorality, dirtiness, and so on. In America's racial and ethnic hierarchy, blacks have clearly been relegated to the lowest level. They have been burdened with an ambiguous, animalistic humanity. Moreover, this is made unavoidable for blacks by the sheer visibility of black skin, a skin that evokes the myth of inferiority on sight. And today this myth is sadly reinforced for many black students by affirmative action programs under which blacks may often enter college with lower test scores and high school grade point averages than whites. "They see me as an affirmative action case," one black student told me at UCLA.

So when a black student enters college, the myth of inferiority compounds the normal anxiousness over whether he or she will be good enough. This anxiety is not only personal but also racial. The families of these students will have pounded into them the fact that blacks are not inferior. And probably more than anything, it is this pounding that finally leaves a mark. If I am not inferior, why the need to say so?

This myth of inferiority constitutes a very sharp and ongoing anxiety for young blacks, the nature of which is very precise: It is the terror that somehow, through one's actions or by virtue of some "proof" (a poor grade, a flubbed response in class), one's fear of inferiority—inculcated in ways large and small by society—will be confirmed as real. On a university campus, where intelligence itself is the ultimate measure, this anxiety is bound to be triggered.

A black student I met at UCLA was disturbed a little when I asked him if he ever felt vulnerable—anxious about "black inferiority"—as a black student. But after a long pause, he finally said, "I think I do." The example he gave was of a large lecture class he'd taken with more than 300 students. Fifty or so black students sat in the back of the lecture hall and "acted out every stereotype in the book." They were loud, ate food, came in late, and generally got lower grades than the whites in the class. "I knew I would be seen like them, and I didn't like it. I never sat by them." Seen like what I asked, though we both knew the answer. "As lazy, ignorant, and stupid," he said sadly.

Had the group at the back been white fraternity brothers, they would not have been seen as dumb whites, of course. And a frat brother who worried about his grades would not worry that he would be seen "like them." The terror in this situation for the student I spoke with was that his own deeply buried anxiety would be given credence, that the myth would be verified, and that he would feel shame and humiliation not because of who he was but simply because he was black. In this lecture hall his race, quite apart from his performance, might subject him to four unendurable feelings—diminishment, accountability to the preconceptions of whites, a powerlessness to change those preconceptions, and, finally, shame. These are the feelings that make up his racial anxiety, and that of all blacks on any campus. On a white campus a black is never far from these feelings, and even his unconscious knowledge that he is subject to them can undermine his self-esteem. There are blacks on every campus who are not up to doing good college-level work. Certain black students may not be happy or motivated or in the appropriate field of study—just like whites. (Let us not forget that many white students get poor grades, fail, drop out.) Moreover, many more blacks than whites are not quite prepared for college, may have



ch up, owing to factors beyond their control: poor previous schooling, example. But the white who has to catch up will not be anxious that his ng behind is a matter of his whiteness, of his being *racially* inferior. The ck student may well have such a fear.

This, I believe, is one reason why black colleges in America turn out 34 cent of all black college graduates, though they enroll only 17 percent of ck college students. Without whites around on campus the myth of infe- rity is in abeyance and, along with it, a great reservoir of culturally im- ed self-doubt. On black campuses feelings of inferiority are personal; on mpuses with a white majority, a black's problems have a way of becoming "black" problem.

But this feeling of vulnerability a black may feel in itself is not as serious roblem as what he or she does with it. To admit that one is made anxious ntegrated situations about the myth of racial inferiority is difficult for ng blacks. It seems like admitting that one is racially inferior. And so, st often, the student will deny harboring those feelings. This is where ae of the pangs of racial tension begin, because denial always involves rtortion.

n order to deny a problem we must tell ourselves that the problem is ething different than what it really is. A black student at Berkeley told that he felt defensive every time he walked into a class and saw mostly ite faces. When I asked why, he said, "Because I know they're all racists. ey think blacks are stupid." Of course it may be true that some whites l this way, but the singular focus on white racism allows this student to cure his own underlying racial anxiety. He can now say that his prob- a—facing a class full of white faces, *fearing* that they think he is dumb— ntirely the result of certifiable white racism and has nothing to do with own anxieties, or even that this particular academic subject may not be best. Now all the terror of his anxiety, its powerful energy, is devoted to mply seeing racism. Whatever evidence of racism he finds—and looking s hard, he will no doubt find some—can be brought in to buttress his rtorted view of the problem, while his actual deep-seated anxiety goes een.

Denial, and the distortion that results, places the problem *outside* the self d in the world. It is not that I have any inferiority anxiety because of my e; it is that I am going to school with people who don't like blacks. This he shift in thinking that allows black students to reenact the protest tern of the Sixties. Denied racial anxiety-distortion-reenactment is the ocess by which feelings of inferiority are transformed into an exaggerated ite menace—which is then protested against with the techniques of the t. Under the sway of this process, black students believe that history is eating itself, that it's just like the Sixties, or Fifties. In fact, it is the not ealed wounds from the past, rather than the inequality that created e wounds, that is the real problem.

This process generates an unconscious need to exaggerate the level of ism on campus—to make it a matter of the system, not just a handful of dents. Racism is the avenue away from the true inner anxiety. How ny students demonstrating for a black "theme house"—demonstrating the style of the Sixties, when the battle was to win for blacks a place on mpus—might be better off spending their time reading and studying? ck students have the highest dropout rate and lowest grade point aver- age of any group in American universities. This need not be so. And it is not the result of not having black theme houses.

Lt was my very good fortune to go to college in 1964, when the ques- n of black "inferiority" was openly talked about among blacks. The sum- er before I left for college I heard Martin Luther King Jr. speak in hicago, and he laid it on the line for black students everywhere. "When u are behind in a footrace, the only way to get ahead is to run faster than

*How many students demonstrating for a black 'theme house' might be better off spending their time reading and studying?*

*In the Sixties,  
integration was a  
challenging social  
concept for both blacks  
and whites on campus.*

*We were remaking  
ourselves—that's what  
one did at college—  
and making history*



the man in front of you. So when your white roommate says he's tired and goes to sleep, you stay up and burn the midnight oil." His statement that we were "behind in a footnote" acknowledged that because of history, few opportunities, of racism, we were, in a sense, "inferior." But this had to do with what had been done to our parents and their parents, not with inherent inferiority. And because it was acknowledged, it was presented to us as a challenge rather than a mark of shame.

Of the eighteen black students (in a student body of 1,000) who were on campus in my freshman year, all graduated, though a number of us were not from the middle class. At the university where I currently teach, the dropout rate for black students is 72 percent, despite the presence of several academic-support programs; a counseling center with black counselors; an Afro-American studies department; black faculty, administrators, and staff; a general education curriculum that emphasizes "cultural pluralism"; an Educational Opportunities Program; a mentor program; a black faculty and staff association; and an administration and faculty that often announce the need to do more for black students.

It may be unfair to compare my generation with the current one. Parents do this compulsively and to little end but self-congratulation. But I don't congratulate my generation. I think we were advantaged. We came along at a time when racial integration was held in high esteem. And integration was a very challenging social concept for both blacks and whites. We were remaking ourselves—that's what one did at college—and making history. We had something to prove. This was a profound advantage; it gave us clarity and a challenge. Achievement in the American mainstream was the goal of integration, and the best thing about this challenge was its secondary message—that we *could* achieve.

There is much irony in the fact that black power would come along in the late Sixties and change all this. Black power was a movement of uplift and pride, and yet it also delivered the weight of pride—a weight that would burden black students from then on. Black power "nationalized" the black identity, made blackness itself an object of celebration and allegiance. But if it transformed a mark of shame into a mark of pride, it also, in the name of pride, required the denial of racial anxiety. Without a frank account of one's anxieties, there is no clear direction, no concrete challenge. Black students today do not get as clear a message from their racial identity as my generation got. They are not filled with the same urgency to prove themselves, because black pride has said, You're already proven, already equal, as good as anybody.

The "black identity" shaped by black power most powerfully contributed to racial tensions on campuses by basing entitlement more on race than on constitutional rights and standards of merit. With integration, black entitlement was derived from constitutional principles of fairness. Black power changed this by skewing the formula from rights to color—if you were black, you were entitled. Thus, the United Coalition Against Racism (UCAR) at the University of Michigan could "demand" two years ago that all black professors be given immediate tenure, that there be special pay incentives for black professors, and that money be provided for an all-black student union. In this formula, black becomes the very color of entitlement, an extra right in itself, and a very dangerous grandiosity is promoted in which blackness amounts to specialness.

Race is, by any standard, an unprincipled source of power. And on campuses the use of racial power by one group makes racial or ethnic or gender difference a currency of power for all groups. When I make my difference into power, other groups must seize upon their difference to contain my power and maintain their position relative to me. Very quickly a kind of politics of difference emerges in which racial, ethnic, and gender groups are forced to assert their entitlement and vie for power based on the single quality that makes them different from one another.

On many campuses today academic departments and programs are estab-



d on the basis of difference—black studies, women's studies, Asian studies, and so on—despite the fact that there is nothing in these “difference” departments that cannot be studied within traditional academic disciplines. If their rationale truly is past exclusion from the mainstream curriculum, shouldn't the goal now be complete inclusion rather than separatism? I think this logic is overlooked because these groups are too interlarded in the power their difference can bring, and they insist on separate departments and programs as a tribute to that power. This politics of difference makes everyone on campus a member of a minority group. It also makes racial tensions inevitable. To highlight one's difference as a source of advantage is also, indirectly, to inspire the enemies of that difference. When blackness (and femaleness) becomes power, then whiteness is also sanctioned as power. A white male student at Stanford told me, “One of my friends said the other day that we should get together and start up a white student union and come up with a list of demands.”

It is certainly true that white maleness has long been an unfair source of power. But the sin of white male power is precisely its use of race and gender as a source of entitlement. When minorities and women use their race, ethnicity, and gender in the same way, they not only commit the same sin but indirectly, sanction the very form of power that oppressed them in the first place. The politics of difference is based on a tit-for-tat sort of logic in which every victory only calls one's enemies to arms.

This elevation of difference undermines the communal impulse by making each group foreign and inaccessible to others. When difference is celebrated rather than remarked, people must think in terms of difference, they must find meaning in difference, and this meaning comes from an endless process of contrasting one's group with other groups. Blacks use whites to define themselves as different, women use men, Hispanics use whites and Asians use blacks, and on it goes. And in the process each group mythologizes and sanctifies its difference, puts it beyond the full comprehension of outsiders. Difference becomes an inaccessible preciousness toward which outsiders are expected to be simply and uncomprehendingly reverential. But beware: In our world, even the insulated world of the college campus, preciousness is

a balloon asking for a needle. At Smith College, graffiti appears: “Niggers, Spics, and Chinks quit complaining or get out.”

Most of the white students I talked with spoke as if from under a thick cloud of accusation. There was always a ring of defensiveness in their complaints about blacks. A white student I spoke with at UCLA told me: “Most white students on this campus think the black student leadership is made up of oversensitive crybabies who spend all their time looking for things to kick up a ruckus about.” A white student at Stanford said: “Blacks do nothing but complain and ask for sympathy when everyone realizes they don't do well because they don't try. If they worked harder, they could do as well as everyone else.”

That these students felt accused was most obvious in their compulsion to assure me that they were not racists. Oblique versions of some-of-my-best-friends-are stories came ritualistically before or after critiques of black students. Some said flatly, “I am not a racist, but . . .” Of course, we all deny being racists, but we only do this compulsively, I think, when we are working against an accusation of bias. I think it was the color of my skin, itself, that accused them.

This was the meta-message that surrounded these conversations like an aura, and in it, I believe, is the core of white American racial anxiety. My students not only accused them, it judged them. And this judgment was a sad part of history that brought them to account whether they deserved such an accounting or not. It said that wherever and whenever blacks were confronted, they had reason to feel guilt. And whether it was earned or un-

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*The darkest fear of white students is that their better lot in life is at least partially the result of their capacity to dehumanize an entire people for their own benefit*

earned, I think it was guilt that set off the compulsion in these students to disclaim. I believe it is true that in America black people make white people feel guilty.

Guilt is the essence of white anxiety, just as inferiority is the essence of black anxiety. And the terror that it carries for whites is the terror of discovering that one has reason to feel guilt where blacks are concerned—much because of what blacks might think but because of what guilt can do about oneself. If the darkest fear of blacks is inferiority, the darkest fear of whites is that their better lot in life is at least partially the result of their capacity for evil—their capacity to dehumanize an entire people for their own benefit, and then to be indifferent to the devastation their dehumanization has wrought on successive generations of their victims. This is the terror that whites are vulnerable to regarding blacks. And the mere fact of being white is sufficient to feel it, since even whites with hearts clear of racism benefit from being white—benefit at the expense of blacks. The conditional guilt having nothing to do with individual intentions or actions. And it makes for a very powerful anxiety because it threatens whites with a view of themselves as inhuman, just as inferiority threatens blacks with a similar view of themselves. At the dark core of both anxieties is the suspicion of incomplete humanity.

So the white students I met were not just meeting me; they were meeting the possibility of their own inhumanity. And this, I think, is why it explains how some young white college students in the late Eighties can so frankly take part in racially insensitive and outright racist acts. They are expected to be cleaner of racism than any previous generation—they were born into the Great Society. But this expectation overlooks the fact that for them, color is still an accusation and judgment. In black faces they see the disconcerting reflection of white collective shame. Blacks remind them that their racial innocence is questionable, that they are the beneficiaries of past and present racism, and that the sins of the father may well have been visited on the children.

And yet young whites tell themselves that they had nothing to do with the oppression of black people. They have a stronger belief in their own innocence than any previous generation of whites, and a natural hostility toward anyone who would challenge that innocence. So (with a great deal of individual variation) they can end up in the paradoxical position of being hostile to blacks as a way of defending their own racial innocence.

I think this is what the young white editors of the *Dartmouth Review* were doing when they shamelessly harassed William Cole, a black music professor. Weren't they saying, in effect, I am so free of racial guilt that I can afford to ruthlessly attack blacks and still be racially innocent? The ruthlessness of that attack was a form of denial, a badge of innocence. Then they were charged with racism, the more ugly and confrontational form of harassment became. Racism became a means of rejecting racial guilt, a way of showing that they were not ultimately racists.

The politics of difference sets up a struggle for innocence among groups. When difference is the currency of power, each group must fight to retain the innocence that entitles it to power. Blacks sting whites with guilt to remind them of their racist past, accuse them of new and more subtle forms of racism. One way whites retrieve their innocence is to discredit blacks, to deny their difficulties, for in this denial is the denial of their own guilt. Blacks see this denial looks like racism, a racism that feeds black innocence and encourages them to throw more guilt at whites. And the cycle continues. The politics of difference leads each group to pick at the sore spots of the other.

**M**en and women who run universities—whites, mostly—participate in the politics of difference, although they handle their guilt differently than many of their students. They don't deny it, but still they don't want to *feel* it. And to avoid this *feeling* of guilt they have tended



g with whatever blacks put on the table rather than work with them to  
s their real needs. University administrators have too often been afraid  
eir own guilt and have relied on negotiation and capitulation more to  
ase that guilt than to help blacks and other minorities. Administrators  
d never give white students a racial theme house where they could be  
e comfortable with people of their own kind," yet more and more uni-  
ities are doing this for black students, thus fostering a kind of volun-  
segregation. To avoid the anxieties of integrated situations, blacks ask  
heme houses; to avoid guilt, white administrators give them theme  
es.

hen everyone is on the run from his anxieties about race, race  
ions on campus can be reduced to the negotiation of avoidances. A  
ern of demand and concession develops in which each side uses the  
r to escape itself. Black studies departments, black deans of student  
s, black counseling programs, Afro houses, black theme houses,  
k homecoming dances and graduation ceremonies—black students  
white administrators have slowly engineered a machinery of sepa-  
m that, in the name of sacred difference, redraws the ugly lines of  
egation.

lack students have not sufficiently helped themselves, and universities,  
ite all their concessions, have not really done much for blacks. If both  
d their anxieties, I think they would see the same thing: Academic par-  
vith all other groups should be the overriding mission of black students,  
it should also be the first goal that universities have for their black  
ents. Blacks can only *know* they are as good as others when they are, in  
as good—when their grades are higher and their dropout rate lower.  
hing under the sun will substitute for this, and no amount of conces-  
s will bring it about.

Universities and colleges can never be free of guilt until they truly help  
k students, which means leading and challenging them rather than ne-  
ating and capitulating. It means inspiring them to achieve academic  
ty, nothing less, and helping them see their own weaknesses as their  
test challenge. It also means dismantling the machinery of separatism,  
aking the link between difference and power, and skewing the formula  
entitlement away from race and gender and back to constitutional  
ts.

as for the young white students who have rediscovered swastikas and the  
d "nigger," I think they suffer from an exaggerated sense of their own  
ocence, as if they were incapable of evil and beyond the reach of guilt.  
it is also true that the politics of difference creates an environment  
ch threatens their innocence and makes them defensive. White stu-  
ts are not invited to the negotiating table from which they see blacks  
others walk away with concessions. The presumption is that they do  
deserve to be there because they are white. So they can only be defen-  
, and the less mature among them will be aggressive. Guerrilla activity  
ensue. Of course this is wrong, but it is also a reflection of an environ-  
nt where difference carries power and where whites have the wrong  
ference."

think universities should emphasize commonality as a higher value than  
iversity" and "pluralism"—buzzwords for the politics of difference. Dif-  
nce that does not rest on a clearly delineated foundation of commonal-  
not only is inaccessible to those who are not part of the ethnic or racial  
up but is antagonistic to them. Difference can enrich only the common  
und.

ntegration has become an abstract term today, having to do with little  
re than numbers and racial balances. But it once stood for a high and  
nirable set of values. It made difference second to commonality, and it  
ed members of all races to face whatever fears they inspired in each oth-  
I doubt the word will have a new vogue, but the values, under whatever  
ne, are worth working for. ■

*The young white  
students who have  
rediscovered the word  
'nigger' suffer from an  
exaggerated sense of  
their own innocence*



# PEACE

By Max Apple

On the Fourth of July, Jay Wilson and his partner, Leo, always threw a big party. They gave away four or five cases of pellet snakes, a gross of sparklers, paper American flags, Uncle Sam masks, just about everything that was on page five of their catalogue. But this year they were short of goods, and Leo wouldn't stop blaming the Koreans.

"They discovered cars and electricity," Leo told the guests, "and then they forgot about loyalty. They forgot about contracts and about people like us who taught them everything." While Leo complained about the Orientals, Jay kept quiet and knew this would be his last Fourth of July in Florida.

The Korean suppliers were making things hard, but Jay didn't blame them. Gifts and novelties were not high-profit items. Jay was the one who had gone to Seoul fresh out of Florida State and come out with 2 million charcoal pellets that turned into snakes as they burned. He'd paid three cents apiece in Korea and sold the whole lot in the United States for seventeen cents apiece, in Canada for twenty.

The snakes were the boost that made the two fraternity brothers entrepreneurs in the mail-order business. Leo liked to brag about it. "We're not into clothes," he'd say. "Otherwise, L.L. Bean would be shaking in their rubber boots."

Jay knew better. He credited their modest success to timing. They went into business in 1978, during the golden age of mail order. People were still worried about gasoline shortages and inflation. They liked to look at photos and use their new credit cards. Before Jay and Leo had a real office, while they were still undergraduates, they had an 800 number. In their senior year of college, they both made decent

grades and a \$20,000 profit. After graduation they took their catalogue business national.

But the partners never saw eye to eye. Jay liked the trinkets they sold, Leo thought they were all junk. Leo put his earnings into a Corvette, a condo, and a twenty-four-foot motorboat. He was clearing about \$40,000 a year and thought he was Rockefeller because they had a nineteen-page catalogue and money came every day in the mail.

Lately, Leo complained all the time. The Hong Kong and Taiwan suppliers were late with the improved pocket rain-bonnets and the flameless Frisbees; and as for the Koreans, J & L Inc. hadn't seen a charcoal snake in six months. The Koreans weren't even answering Leo's telexes.

"You oughta get your ass over to Manila or Pakistan," Leo said, "find us some suppliers who can trust to deliver."

"Why don't you go?" Jay said.

"You think you're a hotshot, don't you? You got to rub it in, like you're my enemy."

Leo would never leave the United States. He preferred not to leave Tallahassee. Even Miami was too foreign for him. "I know the rest of the world is not out to get me," Leo said, "and I'm not gonna bother them either. I've got everything I want right here."

On the inside front cover the J & L catalogue said: "We searched the world for bargains," but after Jay's trip to Korea, they searched the world by searching other catalogues and talking to other distributors. Almost every season new opportunities came their way. Most of them they ignored. Jay let Leo's conservatism influence him. Together they decided not to distribute the Hacky Sack, and they turned down the banana purse and the inflatable greeting card.

Leo was happy enough with his Corvette and his boat. He wanted his life to be like a bee commercial, only in slow motion.

*Max Apple's most recent book is The Propheteers, a novel. He is at work on a collection of stories.*



But Jay, now past thirty, wanted out of Tallahassee—and not to the Third World. He wanted to live in New York.

"That would be great," Leo said, "if we were opening Jewish lawyers by the case."

When J & L celebrated their tenth anniversary, Jay lit his last company sparkler.

"You're nuts," Leo said, "you're walking out of paradise to go live with rats."

Still, Leo was happy to mortgage his house and his boat in order to buy Jay out. He agreed to pay 5 percent of net for the next twenty years of goodwill. Unless Leo got himself another partner, Jay suspected that there would never be

another twenty years. Leo would go on selling military insignias and beer-can holders. Right from the start the business had been all about Leo. Leo was a partner because in Tallahassee he had a car and could make money off of

Jay actually had wanted to move to New York right after college, but Leo had those 2 million dollars in pellets and then there were six-foot feather dusters and the American flags with collapsible poles—every year another project kept him in Tallahassee talking on the phone, turning the pages of the J & L book. It was a good living, but not the life he wanted.

Abraham Huang, in New York, understood this. For more than a year Jay and Huang had been pen pals. Jay wrote Huang a letter after sending a small item about him in *Business Week*. The magazine called him "Mr. Cube." Huang did not imitate the Rubik's Cube, but he merchandised it brilliantly. He bought 50 million units wholesale and sold them. Then the craze broke out. Six months later, just before the imitators came in and drove the price down to ninety-nine cents, Huang sold out. He was now a consultant in New York who charged \$1,000 a day for his advice.

In a letter to Mr. Cube, Jay flattered the entrepreneur's foresight and described his own career.

Huang wrote back. "Many envy well. But you are first to admire product decision. Thank you, Mr. Fan." Jay wrote back to the millionaire, and after that, about once a month, they exchanged stylish mail.

Abraham Huang did not have an office or a driver's license or a computer. He explained to Jay that his cousin, James Huang, drove him through New York in a 1985 Dodge. "As I ride,

I get ideas. Not exactly ideas, thoughts about how to act. When I sit in office, I feel stale. In car, if I am not thinking, I look out window—like seeing a movie."

When Jay wrote to tell Huang that he was thinking of cashing in his Florida business and taking the plunge in the Big Apple, Abraham Huang sent a one-word letter.

"Come."

But once Jay was in New York, the consultant, though friendly and cheerful, kept his distance. He did invite him to sit in the backseat of his Dodge on a sight-seeing tour. But as they cruised through the city, Huang read the Chi-



nese newspaper and his cousin James mentioned places in English so imperfect that Jay, after James's first four thank yous, didn't try to respond. He sat in the backseat and read the street signs. When James pulled up in front of Jay's apartment building, Huang put down his newspaper.

"This time West Side. Next time East Side," he said.

"Listen," Jay said, "I really appreciate the tour. But you guys don't have to bother. I've got a good map and for sight-seeing I can take one of those boat tours."

"East Side very interesting," Huang said. He then spoke Chinese to James, who quickly got

out of the car to shake hands with Jay.

"Make good fortune in New York," James said. He moved his hand through the air like a jet plane. "East Side we go."

After his West Side tour, Jay stayed close to home. He made it his job to learn his neighborhood, Broadway between 110th and 125th. That much seemed manageable. Every morning after reading the *Times* he walked through his territory, seeing the sights and handing out quarters. At Grant's Tomb he turned around and headed back downtown.

In New York everything was for sale. He bought a rug from a man who wore a gold chain bearing the letters G-O-D. Jay was trying to get away from him, but at 113th Street the salesman, running alongside to keep up with Jay's long strides, spread the carpet over the curb. On the rug an Arabian woman emerged from a lamp. Serpents coiled around her arms. Remembering his Korean snake pellets, Jay considered the design a good omen. He paid \$50 and spread the rug under his bed.

This kind of direct merchandising appealed to him. The blood and bones of New York—the business of real estate—was to Jay Wilson as remote as the moons of Jupiter. When he looked at a building all he saw was a place to live. For profit he liked a product, preferably something pocket-size, lightweight, and under \$5.

He told Abraham Huang when they had coffee one afternoon on Canal Street that he felt camaraderie with the Indians who sold Manhattan for beads. Huang put down his cup and shook the younger man's hand.

"You know value," he said. "Now we go see."

James drove them to the warehouses, first near the docks, then deep into the Lower East Side. On Rivington Street, where they looked at cartons of stretchable watchbands and ladies' vinyl pumps, the consultant spoke openly to Jay.

"This," Huang said, pointing from the boxes they surveyed toward the Hudson River, "this is true. In big world all million dollars. Wall Street, Saks Fifth Avenue, Hotel Plaza. Here, underworld. Twenty-five cent, maybe \$2.99, maybe \$3.49. Real numbers."

Jay listened and felt like a brother. Together they stuck their fingers into drums of bottle openers and toothpaste rollers. They held up delicate paper fans and admired flower-shaped ice-cube trays, bath cushions in the shape of a woman's lips, squeezable change purses.

Abraham Huang took him to six or seven locations. They rode in dingy freight elevators and looked at goods under bare bulbs. Not even in Korea had Jay seen such variety. Huang paused in sorrow over a crate of purple handbags.

"Stale color," he said, "impossible." Then he reached into a bin and pulled out several ballpoint pens. "Jane's Bar, Albuquerque," he read. "665-2380." Then, "Ted's Texaco, Ishpeming, AAA Roadwork." He put the pens into a pocket.

"Molded plastic," Abraham Huang said, "ways good to read."

At dusk, on the third floor above a Grant Street lamp factory, Jay Wilson stopped to consider an open crate of swords. The jobber stood beside him.

"This is all that's left of *Star Wars*," the jobber said.

Jay recognized the *Star Wars* sword. It had been a big hit in the toy stores. He pulled out the two-foot weapon with a red handle. The sword was rounded, more a wand than a blade. He pulled it through the air to listen to its distinctive whoosh. Abraham Huang moved back in fear.

"Eight years ago," the jobber said, "it was \$7.95, if you could find it. At Toys 'R Us they were getting full price even after Christmas. This sword has never been discounted. It got out before its time. When the new shipments came in, the toy stores had already rolled their inventory twice and gone on to Indiana Jones."

"You may think *Star Wars* is dead," the jobber continued, "but eight million times as many of those movies rent out. Hardly a day goes by when you don't hear a kid charging someone with a stick and yelling that The Force is with him. And now for ten cents apiece—the price of the packaging—whoever buys this becomes the Pentagon of *Star Wars*. You'll get everything there is."

The jobber kicked the crate. Jay looked at Abraham Huang. Mr. Cube smiled.

Jay took the jobber's card. The swords tinkled like silver dollars, but Jay, a cautious negotiator, wanted to think things over. At a dime a crate he was getting a major item, about this time there was no doubt. In his catalogue days he had sold more than a dime for Abraham Lincoln tin canbles and candle-drip collectors. The sword was not a dimer. It was a two-foot bicolor piece that it even made a sound. Like the Hula-Hoop it had a stone inside, it was something unique. Still, it was dead and might stay dead forever. Jay thought of the purple vinyl handbags, a major item he would never touch. Then he decided that the sword was sellable, the problem was quantity. He didn't want all 600,000. In the morning he telephoned the jobber.

"No dice," the wholesaler said. "I thought Huang told you: No split lots. For chicken I'm not going to deliver twice. This one is either all or nothing."

That afternoon, to test himself, Jay called



His former partner snorted into the phone. Buy 'em," he said, "then stab yourself 600,000 times."

Leo was predictable; but Jay wasn't going to make a business decision just to spite Leo. The fees were too high. He had to think this one through. The sword would never again see \$25, but he could buy for a dime what might be a dollar, maybe two or three. Even if the worst happened, even if he couldn't do a thing for them, Jay felt confident that he could drop the whole load for a quarter and walk away with a percent profit.

The next morning he was ready to get up and make a decision. But he couldn't get up, not without great pain—a backache riveted him to the mattress. Eventually, bent and sockless in slippers, he hobbled to a chiropractor on 110th Street.

At the doctor's thermal Jacuzzi he began to relax out.

"Lumbar misalignment and too much tension," the doctor said. He wrenched Jay's spine and kept him in his office all morning. Then he gave him the name of a chiropractically trained masseuse on 110th Street.

The next day, able to stand and walk, but fearful that the pain would return any second—still on the fence about the swords—Jay called Lucy Fishman. She charged \$40 for thirty minutes and confirmed what the doctor told him. The problem was the gap between his fourth and fifth vertebrae. Ms. Fishman wore a white shirtwaist dress. She looked like a nurse without a cap. Her hair was long and fluffy and when it tickled his skin as she rubbed the empty spaces in his backbone.

"You should relax more," Lucy Fishman said, "at least sit very straight while you're tense." She asked him if this was an especially tense day, and he thought of the swords. "I have a chance to make a very lucrative but very risky business deal," he said. "I'm sure that's what's causing my back trouble."

Ms. Fishman stopped kneading and looked in his eyes.

"If you sell drugs get out of here," she said. She turned over and explained about the swords. She apologized. Near the end of the massage she rubbed his ringless ring finger and asked him to call her sometime socially, if he wished.

That day did, a week later, on the morning he fought the swords.

He had returned to the warehouse in the company of Abraham Huang. Once more Jay counted the swords. Packed a thousand to a crate, there were 600 wooden boxes. He took one out of a crate and sliced the air. With Abraham and James as witnesses, Jay Wilson cut the deal. He handed over a Bank of North Flor-

ida check for \$60,000 and agreed to storage costs of \$1,500 a month.

"Do you like my deal?" he asked Abraham Huang.

"I like," Huang said. "Now work begins."

That night at dinner Jay handed Lucy a sword. They were at a French restaurant on Eighty-sixth Street and between them they finished two bottles of wine. Lucy ordered lobster, which she cracked open with her solid strong fingers. As she ate, she explained the lobster's anatomy.

Even though the swords were all he talked about, Jay knew that Lucy Fishman was going to be more than a date. His lumbar region was connected to his heart.

"This is the biggest deal of my life," he said, "and you are a beautiful and intelligent woman. It feels like all at once I have a business and a personal life."

He leaned across the table to kiss her.

Later, in his bed, he massaged Lucy's back, but her specific directions discouraged him. He asked her to roll over. Face-to-face she was more a woman, less a technician. When he told her he was falling in love, she stopped talking about the density of spinal fluid.

"It's a new life," Jay whispered. "With you and the swords I really am starting over."

**B**y the time the swords were locked into their new quarters in a John Street warehouse, Jay already knew how dead they were. He had called every distributor and broker listed in New York—no interest. Every one of them had already turned down the swords before Jay ever saw them.

"They're not worth the storage," a Brooklyn toy distributor told him. "I turned them down for a nickel. I wouldn't even take them for free."

At the end of his first month as the owner of 600,000 swords, Jay's back pain returned. But he was blessed with Lucy, who sat on the small of his back and realigned him as she listened to him lament his purchase. The \$60,000 buy had exhausted his capital, but because of her his love was only beginning.

"Would you marry a bankrupt?" he asked her.

"Yes," Lucy said, "but I wouldn't lend him any money."

The masseuse said one thing, then did another. In the third month of their courtship, when Jay ran out of cash, she went to her savings account and paid the month's bill for storing the swords.

Lucy was cheerful about it. "It's like sending a kid to college."

Jay was full of love and guilt. "All those backrubs," he said, "all that good work to support my

stupidity."

"You're not stupid," Lucy said.

"I threw away \$60,000," he told Lucy, "nine years work. My youth."

"You're still young," she said. "You're just right for me."

He wanted to marry Lucy, but without money for a ring or a ceremony, he said nothing about his intentions.

When he had gone through his list of brokers and factors, when the Mets and the Yankees told him they had no interest in a Sword Day, when he had run up hundreds of dollars of bills on Lucy's phone calling Mexican and Venezuelan and even South African distributors, it suddenly occurred to Jay Wilson that he had been taken.

In a fit of rage he took a subway to Chinatown and pounded on the door of Huang's spacious loft. Mrs. Huang, frightened by the unusual man pounding on her steel door, buzzed for help. Cousin James, carrying a baseball bat, pinned Jay to the floor but relaxed when he recognized the man he'd driven around the West Side months before.

"East Side?" he asked, and put out his hand.

"Abraham Huang," Jay said. "Where is he?"

James led Jay down two creaky flights of stairs to a basement room where Huang sat watching an aquarium filled with brightly colored fish.

"My friend," Huang said as he rose to greet Jay.

"Friend, my ass. You set me up. You knew how much cash I had. You led me straight to those swords and set the price just at the top of my budget. Did you get the whole sixty?"

"No," Huang said, "only half."

"You bastard."

"Not bastard. Straight business."

"You knew nobody wanted them. You offered them all over town."

"All over world," Huang said. "Dime. Very cheap price. Require very big risk."

Cousin James brought in a pot of tea.

"You just took my money," Jay said. "You knew I'd never be able to sell."

"No. I knew Abraham Huang could not sell. Maybe Jay Wilson sell. This is business."

"Tea?" Cousin James said. "Later East Side?"

"I want my money," Jay said. "I'm in love. I want to get married, have a family. I was stupid to risk everything on one throw."

"Yes," Huang said, "swords stupid but love and family nice."

"I have no money."

"Most of world have no money. People marry, have children, live good."

Huang smiled, as friendly as ever. Jay Wilson, without a legal or moral leg to stand on, admitted his helplessness.

"It was my own fault," he said, "but I'll you until the day I die."

"Maybe not," Abraham Huang said bowed as Cousin James followed visitor up the stairs.

**T**wo months later, with the warehouse threatening to throw his 600 crates into street, Jay, ten pounds lighter, sat at a wobbly table at the corner of Amsterdam and Ninth Street. Unable to sell thousands of swords, he was now selling single swords, one day at another location. In two months of visiting New York street fairs, he had earned enough to pay for one month's storage. In two weeks, canvas bags he carried ninety swords with him from fair to fair. He asked \$3 apiece but they sold for less. He stopped eating lunch to save money, he looked for coins on the sidewalk though he had not done it yet, he started thinking about leaping over turnstiles to avoid paying subway fare. He pawned his Rolex watch, which he suspected, Citibank offered him absolutely nothing for his 5 percent interest in the future of J & L Inc. When he could no longer pay rent, he moved in with Lucy. Lucy still loved him.

"Forget the swords and get a job," she said. "You're a person like everyone else. You made a mistake. It's not the end of the world."

Jay knew she was right. He promised to stop selling the swords. He wanted just a month or two—something might turn up. He checked the Fourth of July as the end.

"Promise?" Lucy asked.

Jay promised, and even in his desperation knew how lucky he was to be teamed with a woman.

Since she worked close to the Amsterdam street fair, where he'd be today, Saturday, Lucy said she would bring him a lunch at Ninth Street. When she arrived at 12:30, he had sold only four swords. He had taken to carrying his money, mostly singles, in a wad in his hand. Sometimes he wished that he had kept that with the \$60,000—kept it all in his hand in singles so he could feel how much it was before he squandered it on swords.

Jay held up four fingers. Lucy kissed him on the cheek and gave him two peanut-butter sandwiches. She browsed for a few minutes, looking at jewelry in the booth next to his.

The neighbor, an old hippie with a curly beard, did a good trade in antique earrings. He had seen him at other fairs, recognized him by his MAKE LOVE NOT WAR tattoo. His name was Chuck—he had introduced himself that way when he laid out earrings and Jay asked for swords. Lucy browsed Chuck's table, and Jay watched the sun dip into her halter top.



ibs glistened. Though he loved her, Jay n, with his two bags of molded plastic s, felt like a fool and a good-for-nothing : her.

on't worry," Lucy said. "Eat your lunch. e you at six."

avoid embarrassing him, she didn't look

nning the street, Jay saw no potential cus- s. The temperature was already in the es—unseasonably warm for May. The were in the shade; the retirees who had playing gin rummy folded their table. Only people pulling grocery carts walked past. un was so fierce that Jay put his samples into the canvas bags to keep them from ng. On his scarred table the lunch bag sat . He considered eating one of the peanut- sandwiches, but, as usual, the thought of 00,000 swords made him lose his appetite. ough times, huh?" Chuck said.

used to have \$60,000," Jay said. "Now I've ese."

ell," Chuck said, "in '67 I had a rainbow- ed van and four chicks. We had free acid quadraphonic sound. Now I'm a grandfa- He pulled a picture from his nylon wallet. ized at a toddler.

othing freakier than a kid, is there?" k said.

oved by his neighbor's past, Jay handed the swords.

ive 'em to your granddaughter," he said, to her friends."

ou should hang on to some," Chuck said as cepted both canvas bags. "Sometimes they a comeback, like the Confederate hat or Mickey Mouse watch."

on't worry," Jay said, "I've kept a few." He Chuck his lunch too. With his table now Jay put the wad of bills into his pocket and n to walk down Ninety-sixth Street.

ey," Chuck said, "don't give up. I know e you can get socks and blank tapes. They s use socks and tapes."

waved and despite the heat began to jog wn. Without ninety swords on his back he ght and strong. At Ninety-ninth Street he r to run to the rhythm of a car alarm. Peo- tared at him, wondering at his speed on a day. At 110th Street he passed an Ethio- parade. At 121st, though hardly panting, oused for a line of people in red gowns with es emblazoned on their chests.

ey were the faculty and students of the n Theological Seminary. The seminary, a e two blocks square, guarded the entrance rant's humble tomb. Jay jogged in place : watched the graduation procession. The sters-to-be, if armed with swords, could

have passed for crusaders.

When the procession marched through the gates of the seminary, Jay, with nothing better to do, followed everyone into the cool auditorium and found a seat. The air-conditioning soothed him. But he felt hungry—he regretted giving his lunch to the earring seller. He rose to leave and get a sandwich but the ceremony was already in progress. The graduates, quiet as ghosts, were making their way down the aisles. An usher motioned for Jay to sit.

With no other choice, he stayed for graduation. He heard the coughs of the proud parents and the rustling of the ceremonial gowns. As the seminarians entered into the service of the Lord, Jay, lulled by the organ, fell into a quiet sleep. He awoke to the words of the commencement speaker.

Reverend Lamberts, a tall, thin man, touched the pages of his speech as if he were reading Braille; Jay, with the clarity of the awakened, heard everything. The Reverend described in detail an enormous undertaking of the church—the sponsorship of an International Day of Peace.

It took all of Jay's self-control to stay in his seat until the ceremony ended. When the graduates marched out, he rushed to the platform; he needed to know the date of the International Day of Peace.

**A**t the end of the year, just before Christmas, on the International Day of Peace, people of goodwill assembled throughout the world. The President and other leaders of nations gave their approval to the event. Hindus and Muslims joined with the Federation of Churches and Synagogues. On a Sunday at noon eastern standard time, mankind condemned war.

Seventy-five thousand assembled in Tokyo's Olympic Stadium, 8,000 in London's Albert Hall. End zone to end zone they filled Soldier Field in Chicago, and 120,000 stood in the São Paulo soccer stadium. In Moscow and Kuala Lumpur, in select locations throughout the world, men and women made contemporary the words of the prophet. Nearly 600,000 blades, freshly stamped "Turn *Star Wars* into ploughshares," were raised and then dropped at exactly noon. Television throughout the world captured this historic event. Peace had not known such a day since 1945.

At \$2 apiece, the National Council of Churches considered the swords a bargain, a small price for international symbolism. Lucy Fishman, still pink as a bride, and Jay Wilson, an anti-war saint, stood among the crowd at Madison Square Garden and dropped their swords to enjoy, slightly more than anyone else on earth, the fruits of peace. ■

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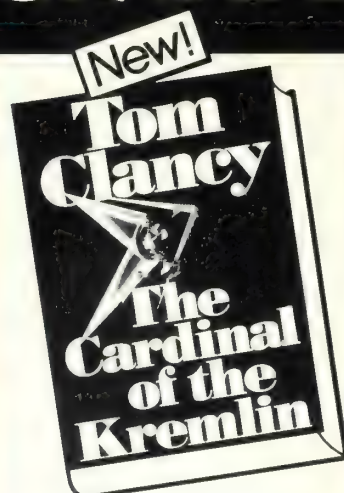
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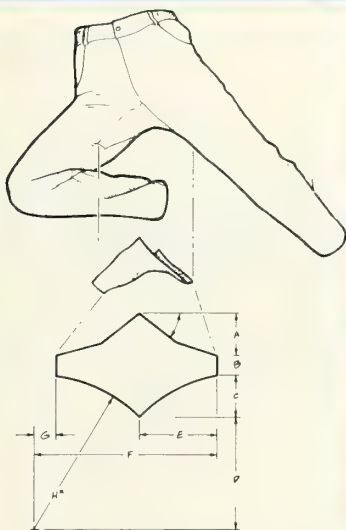


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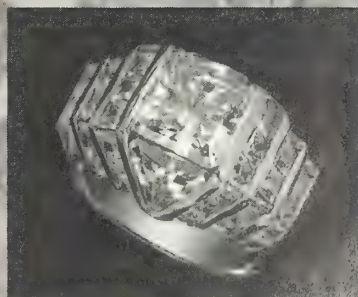
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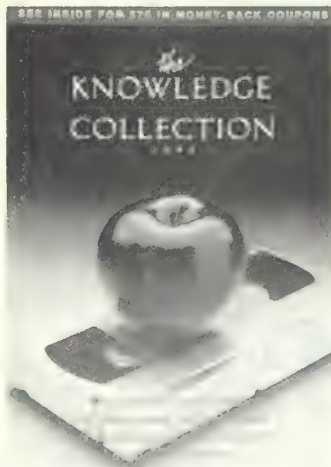


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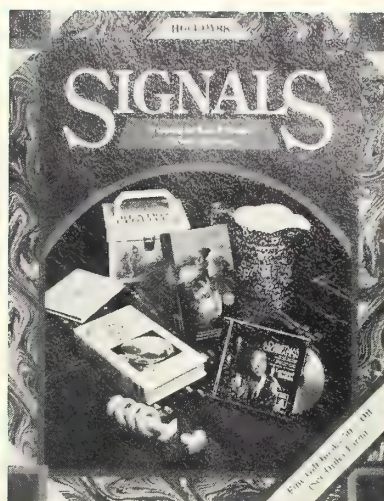
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# SKELETONS IN OUR MUSEUMS' CLOSETS

Native Americans want their ancestors' bones back

By Douglas J. Preston

**S**ome years ago, I worked at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City—as a writer and editor, not as a curator. One morning I opened the door to my office and was nearly knocked down by the smell of mothballs. Later I complained to my co-workers at the coffee machine, and one of them suggested that I contact the anthropology department. “I think they’ve got some kind of storage room next to your office,” he said.

Indeed they did. I learned over at the anthropology department that a wall of cheap plasterboard was all that separated me from the museum’s collection of well-preserved human bodies. It seems that this particular morning the mummies had received a fresh change of paradichlorobenzene crystals to keep them free of insects. Curious, I decided to pay my neighbors a visit.

The mummies were stored in the defunct South American hall, a cavernous room with a tiled floor and fine, old oak cabinets. Most of the mummies were stacked along the back wall in a solid tier of black tin crates; several in the center of the room were in glass cases—apparently

*Douglas J. Preston is a former manager of the department of publications at the American Museum of Natural History.*



they had once been on display.

It was that morning when I first began to understand that the American Museum collected not only the art and artifacts of other cultures but bodies too, along with bones, skulls, whole skeletons—in a sense, collected *people* of other cultures. It is such a large collection that storing it is a headache. One curator had sacrificed half his office for the keeping of thousands of human skulls, each in its own little cardboard box. Lining the halls outside the anthropology department's offices were rows of lovely nineteenth-century cabinets; in many of them, behind rippled glass, I glimpsed stacks of human bones and mummified body parts. Nobody knew

exactly how many individual remains (or parts of remains) the museum held, but my guess was close to 25,000 in a very large graveyard.

My curiosity eventually led me to the museum's archives. What I wanted to know was where did all these remains come from? Why did the museum collect them? And why were they doing here now? You wouldn't know all that from visiting the museum's exhibition halls. It was as if they were a secret mystery.

Reading old museum reports, I learned that the story of how the human remains got to the museum are in some cases as unsettling as the bones and skulls and mummies themselves. There is, for example, the story of the Fort Rock mummies. In 1928, the museum launched the Stoll-McCann Arctic expedition—actually a wealthy shooting party—to collect a Pacific walrus in the Aleutian Islands for one of the museum's new hall groups. (You can still see a few of the walrus brought back, now stuffed in the Hall of Ocean Life.) But the expedition was after more than walrus. Anthropologists at the museum learned that in 1875 a sealer had unloaded in San Francisco a dozen mummies to have been collected in the Al-



The anthropologists, who were deep into research on the origins of man in the New World and relationships between the tribes, were excited in studying Aleut mummies and hoped more could be found; even an archaeologist named Edward Weyer Jr. along with the expedition for just this purpose. When the expedition's boat anchored at one or another Aleut port, Weyer made inquiries about old graveyards or desert-villages. During one stopover, he asked from several villagers about a "large rock" in the Bering Sea, just north of Unalaska Island.

The spot was easily found: according to Weyer's writings, the members of the expedition saw a "great abrupt cliff which was cleft near its landward end by a deep precipitous gorge," and from the sea. They named it Fortress Rock, because it resembled a medieval castle. Weyer and his party landed on the island's shoreline, reached and scaled the cliff with ropes and axes.

The island turned out to be a kind of Aleut mausoleum. Most of the cliff was covered with shallow caves, and a quick search of the caves along the cliffs yielded dozens of mummies. At one end of the island, Weyer's assistant discovered a buried crypt constructed of expertly mortised driftwood timbers and secured with ivory nails. The crypt had been lined and lined with sealskins and covered with grass. Inside he found exquisitely preserved bird skins sewn together, harpoons, stone lamps, beads of ivory, and other offerings—as well as four tightly lashed and wrapped bundles. Inside each bundle was a preserved human being: two men, a woman, and a child.

Weyer and his assistant lowered the artifacts and mummies on ladders to the base of the cliff, where they were packed in crates and shipped to New York. The museum considered Fortress Rock a major discovery.

The Fortress Rock mummies have since been placed on display by the museum. It is possible that they will remain forever in one or another of the museum's storage rooms, given a change of moth flakes every year and then. But I doubt it. In the few years a small problem has

come up. Mummies, as well as thousands of other remains in museums, have become an issue.

Across the country, Native American tribes—by Native American I mean American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and native Hawaiian—and Pan-Indian groups, such as the Native American Rights Fund and the National Congress of American Indians, are demanding that mummies and skeletal parts held by museums be returned to them for reburial.

The American Museum of Natural History is by no means alone in housing large collections of Native American mummies and skeletal parts. The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History has about 18,500 specimens (each "specimen" might be anything from a few bones to a complete skeleton or mummy); there are perhaps another 5,000 at Harvard's Peabody Museum; the National Park Service has perhaps as many as 20,000 specimens tucked away in repositories all over the country. The Native American Rights Fund estimates that there might be as many as 600,000 such specimens in museums, historical societies, universities, and private collections in the United States.

Several state legislatures (Alaska among them, at the request of the Eskimo and Aleuts) have passed resolutions calling for the return of all Native American specimens held by the Smithsonian. Legislation on the issue is slated to be introduced in Congress this year. If it passes, the federal government would begin to assist Native Americans who want remains returned to them. And, if Native Americans are able to get the bill they want passed, the new law would force the museums to yield their collections. Already, without federal action, numerous tribes (with the aid of activist groups) are moving ahead on their own—pressuring museums, even threatening to sue, for the return of remains.

To many Native Americans, the collecting of their ancestors' bones and bodies by museums is a source of pain and humiliation—the last stage of a conquest that had already robbed them of their lands and destroyed their way of life. "They took every-

thing," Walter Echo-Hawk, a Pawnee and staff attorney with the Native American Rights Fund, said to me recently. "Including our dead. Even our dead." Native Americans argue that museums have had decades to study these bones. They also wonder why museums need thousands of skeletons. To them, the scientific interest in Native American remains smacks of racism, as if they were freaks or curios. "Let them study Germans or Swedes for a change," one Aleut I spoke to told me.

Physical anthropologists I talked with are aghast at the possibility that they might have to surrender their collections of Native American remains—what they call their "data base." They explained that there have been important developments in the past decade, the discovery of new techniques for analyzing bone and desiccated tissue. In the next ten years, I was repeatedly told, the careful study of these bones could well yield answers to some of the deepest questions in American anthropology—including questions about the very nature of the conquest of the Native Americans. Museum administrators, too, are anxious about, and at times baffled by, the desire on the part of Native Americans to retrieve and rebury their ancestors' remains. The issue, in a sense, attacks the museums at their heart; the perpetual care of the collections, in light of the Native Americans' demands, begins to seem a barbarous act. Entire worldviews can appear at times to be butting against each other: for a curator or researcher, to rebury something is to destroy it. Natural-history museums exist primarily to hold things, not only for current research but—most importantly—for whatever research might be conducted in the future. Because no one can predict what that future research might be, virtually nothing can be thrown away.

However, for some of the Native Americans I spoke with, this approach to scholarship and research is nothing if not otherworldly. How, say, could the needs of science compare with the fact that their grandfathers' spirits are forced to wander unceasingly because their bones are in a box at the Smithsonian?

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In the spring of 1986, a group of Northern Cheyenne chiefs went to Washington at the invitation of Senator John Melcher, a conservative Montana Democrat. The purpose of the visit was to try to recover one of the tribe's sacred Sun Dance songs that had been lost many years before, but which they hoped might have been recorded on wax cylinders now stored at the Library of Congress. The chiefs quickly succeeded in recovering a lost song, and in the time remaining, they decided to go on over to the Mall to have a look at the Smithsonian's Cheyenne collection. They spent an afternoon in a large storage room on the top floor of the National Museum of Natural History, poring over photographs and accession records.

Last fall I spoke to Clara Spotted Elk, a Northern Cheyenne Indian and legislative assistant to Senator Melcher, who had made the arrangements for the Cheyenne to travel to Washington and search for their songs. "As we were walking out," she said, "we saw there were huge ceilings in the room, with row upon row of drawers. Someone remarked that there must be a lot of Indian stuff in those drawers. Quite casually, a curator with us said, 'Oh, this is where we keep the skeletal remains,' and he told us how many—18,500. Everyone was shocked. I mean, it was such a shocking thing that no one said anything. The chiefs were quite alarmed because we had been sitting there all day with those restless spirits. So we really beat it out of there.

"A few days later, I related this incident to Senator Melcher. He said, 'Young lady, you've got to learn to get your facts straight. The Smithsonian couldn't possibly have 18,500 Indian skeletons rattling around in the attic.' So I checked into it and reported back that, yes, indeed, they had 18,500 skeletons. He was outraged."

Shortly thereafter, Melcher and his staff began to draft the Native American Museum Claims Commission Act, known in Washington and among Native American activists as the "Bones Bill." The bill was approved in committee but got no further in the 100th Congress. Melcher lost his Senate seat last November, but it is ex-

pected that Democratic Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii will reintroduce the bill this year. Many museum officials and Indian activists alike believe the Bones Bill in one form or another will soon be passed.

The Bones Bill, as drafted by Senator Melcher, would apply to most Native American remains, as well as "grave goods" and religious artifacts in public and private American collections. While the details remain to be debated and hashed out, here's how such a bill would probably work: If a tribe can show that a collection of remains is either clearly from its tribe or had been dug up from its ancestral burial grounds, then the tribe can request that the remains be handed over to it. The only way a museum could keep the remains is to show proof that the bones had been dug up with tribal permission. The bill would establish a national commission to mediate disputes between tribes and museums.

The bill promises to raise all kinds of complex legal questions. Are remains "abandoned property" or do they belong to the descendants, even if those descendants are no longer aware of them? And how does one define "descendant"? The Smithsonian has large holdings of tribal remains originally picked up by army doctors and curio collectors on battlefields. Who has a right to these? And what about extinct cultures? Can people of Indian groups legitimately claim (as some do) that they speak for the dead of a thousand years ago?

Even without the Bones Bill, Native Americans have been active in seeking the return of Indian remains. In some cases tribes have simply asked museums for remains, but increasingly they have raised the possibility of lawsuits. The Smithsonian has been approached by the Aleuts of Kodiak Island, Alaska; the Oglala Sioux of South Dakota; and fourteen other tribes. Native Americans have also demanded the return of skeletons held by the National Park Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, and some small museums and historical societies in the West. "And this," said Christopher Quale, an attorney for the Thlinglet Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, in North Dakota, "is just the beginning. It's conceivable that



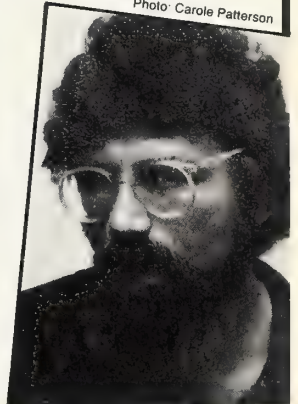
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time in the not-so-distant future  
e won't be a single Indian skele-  
in any museum in the country.  
e going to put them"—he meant  
the physical anthropolo-  
gists—"out of business."

he growing battle between Na-  
Americans and American muse-  
affords its share of ironies. For the  
time, the traditional defenders of  
ve American rights and culture—  
anthropologists and the museums  
uddenly find themselves and their  
es under attack by the very people  
have devoted themselves to ob-  
ing, researching, caring about.  
ween 1880 and 1930, when Amer-  
Indian society and culture were  
g decimated, the anthropologists  
the museums were the only forces  
ur society working to protect—or  
east to save what remained of—  
heritage. As a result, collecting  
tutions ended up preserving many  
cts of Indian culture (such as the  
yenne Sun Dance song) that oth-  
se would have disappeared.

onic too is the fact that during the  
twenty years, while many Native  
mericans have sought to revive their  
itions, it is to the museums and  
ropologists that they have turned.  
museums have the photographs  
wing how things once looked, the  
criptions of sacred rituals, the sal-  
artifacts and songs. They cap-  
d for posterity many things that  
e forgotten or lost during the time  
n the government was actively sup-  
sing Indian culture. Originally,  
museums and the anthropologists  
omed the Native American "re-  
al." But now?

another irony: Native Americans  
receiving some of their strongest  
port from the traditional oppo-  
ts of the Native American rights  
vement—the white, Western  
servatives. In California, for ex-  
ple, right-wing Christian Funda-  
ntalists have been among the  
ians' most effective allies. West-  
politicians in chronic trouble with  
Indian tribes (as was Senator  
lcher) can champion the Bones  
without alienating their white  
servative support—it's not expen-  
e: "welfare" legislation, nor does it  
olve relinquishing any land. More-

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over, the issue can be used (and has been) to bash the liberal, elitist Eastern museum and scientific establishment—always a crowd pleaser.

Most museum officials and anthropologists realize it will be very difficult for politicians to oppose the return of remains, and for this reason, they are very worried. The American Association of Museums has been working on a reburial policy of its own—one, naturally, that would allow museums to hold on to more remains than they might under more stringent legislation. "If we don't do it," Edward H. Able Jr., executive director of the association, told me, "then someone else will do it for us." In all my years of working in and around museum people, I have never seen anything like the uneasiness this issue inspires. One curator, on hearing the subject of my phone call, blurted out, "Oh my God." And an eminent physical anthropologist, after a long and unresponsive interview in which he repeatedly denied there was a problem, suddenly broke off and said: "Why are you doing this to us?"

**I**n the pending battle over collections of Indian remains, two questions will no doubt be frequently asked: Why were these bones collected in the first place? And what scientific purpose do they serve today?

In 1886 a young German anthropologist named Franz Boas arrived in the United States with a radical idea, one that would become the cornerstone of modern thinking about race and culture. This was the idea of cultural relativism. Boas argued that human races were *intrinsically* equal—equally advanced and equally expressive of the complexities of the human spirit. Thus, the smallest tribe with a distinct culture was as important to anthropology as the great edifice of Western Civilization itself. Boas's views took hold in the lecture hall and then in society at large.

Cultural relativists saw that the fantastic diversity of human cultures would soon be gone, swept away by war and progress. And thus began a frenzied period of collecting that would last half a century. If cultures could be "saved," they should be. But

if the culture didn't survive, the experts felt that science could at assemble a complete record of mass of raw data for future study. Bones were taken, plaster casts made. And the researchers dug up native gravesites, gathered skeletons and mummies, and carried them

The people whose ancestors being "collected" were never seriously consulted; no one worried about their beliefs, values, feelings. Boas himself, in the dead of night, raided the graveyards of his beloved Kwakiutl tribe of British Columbia. "It is most unpleasant to steal bones from a grave," he later wrote in his diary, "but what is the use, someone has to do it." The values of science Boas would say again and again, supreme: it was a matter of cultural history, not Kwakiutl mores. Or Christian mores, for that matter: museums are holding large collections of the remains of other races (particularly whites) as well.

Museums continue to defend their early collecting practices. "Our collections were gathered according to the legal and ethical standards of the time," one museum director told me. "There's no way you can go back and rejudge the past."

But even by the standards of today, the methods of collecting were deemed sufficiently shocking to be kept out of the public eye. Consider the case of the six Eskimo who died to the American Museum of Natural History in 1896. The Arctic explorer Robert E. Peary had brought them from Smith Sound, Greenland to New York City—he had reported that they asked members of the tribe if they wanted to "visit" New York. The Eskimo lived closer to the North Pole than humans anywhere else on the earth, Franz Boas and his colleague Aleš Hrdlička were particularly eager to study them, and of them spacious accommodation on the museum's fifth floor. On October 4, the Eskimo tour group arrived. It was noted in passing that they all had "slight colds." Hrdlička immediately began measuring and photographing them. He also made casts of their faces, arms, and legs.

In four of the six Eskimo, the "slight colds" developed into tuberculosis.



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## A: He has only two feet.

ally, less than two feet. Twenty two inches to be  
His entire life is spent chained in a wooden box  
uring only 22 inches wide and 56 inches long. The  
so small that the calf can't walk or even turn  
id.

people think animal abuse is illegal. It isn't. In  
actories, it's business as usual. "Milk-fed" veal is  
ned by making a calf anemic. The calf is *not* fed  
er's milk. He's fed an antibiotic laced formula that  
s severe diarrhea. He must lie in his own excrement  
king on the ammonia gases. He's chained in a  
ned building with hundreds of other baby calves  
ring the same fate. They are immobilized, sick,  
nemic.

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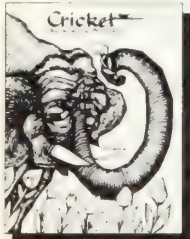


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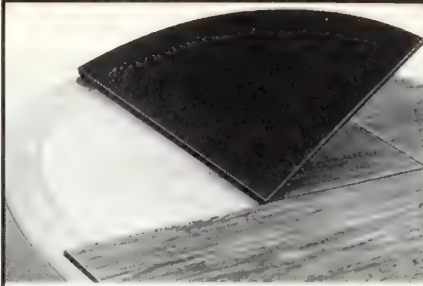
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which they had no natural immunity. By spring, despite everything that could be done, all four had died. Hrdlička and Boas quickly went to work. Here was a splendid, unparalleled opportunity to add postmortem data to their Eskimo file. Hrdlička rected that all four be macerated, boiled, and reduced to skeletons at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University. He then stalled the skeletons in the museum collection, where he could study them at leisure.

Why do museums want all this now? Do mummies and bones serve any useful scientific purpose today?

Physical anthropologists used to think that by measuring bones they could answer important questions about the origin and spread of human beings across the New World and exact relationships between the various races. They measured the bones of thousands of skeletons and tried to quantify physical similarities and differences. Despite tomes packed with tables, graphs, and charts, early physical anthropology pretty much failed to answer the bigger questions; the work yielded only empty classifications of "physical types." Physical anthropology as it applied to the modern races gradually became unfashionable and the skeletons languished unstudied, for the most part, in museum drawers.

But in recent years these remains have apparently become valuable once more to researchers. I spoke with Douglas Owsley, an associate curator at the Smithsonian, who is one of the staunchest defenders of the museum collection of human remains. In the past few years, he said, biomedical researchers have been developing techniques to extract certain proteins from human bones—proteins called immunoglobulins that are generated to fight off disease, and that remain in the bones in trace amounts long after death. According to Owsley, the bones in museums today might be able to tell us about the diseases people once contracted. "This technique," Owsley said, "will help track the history of human diseases, the antiquity of diseases, even the evolution of diseases." Not only



promise to revolutionize our understanding of the past, he added, but might prove a powerful new tool for finding disease in our time.

Owsley also mentioned that human remains can now be isolated from mummified tissues, and molecular biologists at Berkeley are working to isolate DNA from archaeologically retrieved remains. (DNA has already been extracted from an 8,000-year-old preserved human brain.) If this technique works, Owsley said, "We will be able to study directly the genetics of ancient populations. From that, we can reconstruct such things as the movements of ancient peoples." You may ask (as many Native Americans do), couldn't museums keep a dozen or so skeletons from each tribe, and give the rest back? It is not, alas, the way science works. To arrive at general truths, to extrapolate from the particular to the general, scientists need to study large numbers of objects. Scientists testing drugs need large sample groups in order to say with any certainty whether something works. In a sense, the same thing holds true for physical anthropology; and the more powerful and refined the techniques become, the more important it is to work with large numbers of remains.

David Hurst Thomas, curator of anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History, is a specialist in Native American prehistory. He sometimes excavates human remains, but he has had Native Americans try to put down his sites. Thomas has a lot of thinking about the issue. "The body," he said, "carries forth a record of almost everything that happened to that person in life." Modes of starvation and disease, he explained, leave marks on bones, much like tree rings.

He asked Thomas to give me some specific examples of research that could be done using bones. "Well," he said, leaning back in his chair, "could Father Junípero Serra, the founder of the Spanish missions in California, be made a saint?"

Many American Catholics say yes, Serra brought Christianity and a new way of life to thousands of Indians. The Catholic Church has cautiously agreed, and has advanced

Father Serra to beatification, one rung below sainthood. California tribes have angrily protested, arguing that Father Serra's missions were little better than concentration camps where brutal slave labor, starvation, and disease killed all but a fraction of the native population.

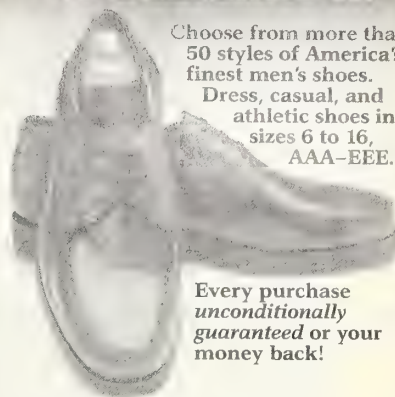
"So how do we resolve this?" Thomas continued. "Well, you go to those old missions, excavate the Indian remains, and see what people were dying of." Archaeologists in California proposed to do just that. Their effort was blocked by tribes there, who did not want the remains disturbed. "It's too bad," said Thomas. "An examination of those bones could document precisely what the Indians have argued, that they were badly mistreated by the missionaries during that period."

Thomas himself is sympathetic to Native American claims and feels that many "historic-period" skeletons—those of Native Americans thought to have lived after the arrival of the Europeans—ought to be reburied. He will not excavate a grave without getting the permission of the group he feels is most closely related to those whose remains he plans to dig up. He will eventually rebury all the historic-period Indian skeletons he excavates, but he plans to keep track of where each one is reburied—a process he calls "in-the-ground curation"—so that anthropologists in the future can easily (but respectfully, he emphasized) locate and re-examine a specific skeleton.

"In many ways," he said, "anthropologists and archaeologists brought this whole situation upon themselves. There are those who think that this is just a political flap that will blow over, and then they can go back to the good old days when they could pop a burial whenever they wanted. They are sadly mistaken. Unless museums willingly respond to these concerns, we will be put right out of business."

I was curious to see how a typical reburial request was coming along. I contacted members of the Minnekahton Sioux tribe in South Dakota. In 1988, the tribe had sent a letter to Robert McCort

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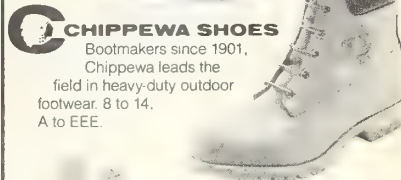
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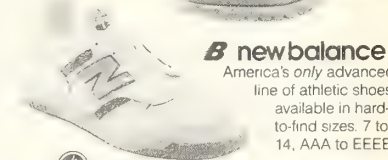
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secretary of the Smithsonian, as for all Oglala Sioux remains held the Smithsonian. These, according to the Oglala Sioux, number 350 to specimens, including the remains of three known individuals: Smoke Two Face, and Black Feet.

The Sioux, and the Oglala Sioux particular, are among the tribes resisted most fiercely the white encroachment on their land. At the time the Sioux, a nomadic tribe ranged over an area encompassing northern Great Plains and West prairies, from Wisconsin to the Dakotas. Today the Oglala Sioux occupy a 2-million-acre reservation in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. The tribe suffers an 80 percent unemployment rate; alcoholism is a commonplace and the suicide rate is several times the national average—all a result, anthropologists and many Native Americans alike will tell you, of the cultural despair that followed the destruction of their traditional way of life. Tribal leaders believe that one way to allay these woes is to try to recapture as much as possible, the old traditions. And they see the reburial of their dead as an element in this effort.

I spoke with Severt Young Bear, a fifty-four-year-old Oglala Sioux deeply involved in the reburial issue. In a slow, quavering voice, barely audible over a crackling long distance line, he talked about why they wanted the remains back. "In Lakota"—the Indian name of the Sioux subgroup that includes the Oglala—"we have a road we walk on in this earth. Lakota view the spirit of a person as being entirely different from the Christian view. In Lakota, after death we take care of the spirit. If you disturb the spirit it starts wandering. The spirit of my grandfather Smoke is still walking back and forth from his [burial] hill in Washington."

Severt Young Bear said that the tribe might have a traditional reburial ceremony between Washington and Pine Ridge. "We make four stops and ask the spirit to return back home, so the spirit will not be lost in the archives of the Smithsonian."

He talked about the tribe's plans for reburial. "We want to bury them in May. It's beautiful here in May. The



is green and flowers are growing  
ywhere. That would be a good  
e." He also talked about Sioux his-  
y, about how the Sioux were once  
greatest warriors in North Amer-  
Severt Young Bear worried that  
tribe had no money to cover the  
isportation and burial costs and  
ild try to find funding, some-  
re. He was concerned about some  
he young men of the tribe, who  
ited to go get the remains right  
y and bring them back in a U-  
l. He felt this would be undigni-  
and disturbing to the spirits.  
Will there be any problem, I asked,  
h the Smithsonian? Have they  
n cooperative?

He seemed surprised by the ques-  
n. "We haven't seen anybody op-  
ing it. Why would they?"

then called the Washington law  
n of Hobbs, Straus, Dean &  
lder, which I understood to be the  
e's general counsel. There, Karen  
nk, a legislative analyst involved in  
matter, quickly dismissed any no-  
I might have developed that the  
lala would be getting their remains  
k anytime soon.

"Except for those identified by  
me," she said, "I'm skeptical that  
y can get any of those remains back  
all. The Smithsonian has asked the  
be to prove that it, the museum,  
esn't own those remains. With the  
ithsonian's admittedly poor records,  
an't see how the tribe will be able to  
ove anything." She explained that  
hough the firm had helped the  
lala initially, it now feels that any  
ther legal pursuit would be far too  
stly. The tribe must simply pressure  
the Smithsonian privately,  
on its own.

A number of anthropologists I  
oke with pointed out that once a fa-  
rite pastime of many tribes was the  
secration of the graves of their en-  
emies (which is true); others noted  
at tribal burial customs and ceremo-  
ies have changed (also true). They  
id that the tribes of today simply  
n't have the same culture, ceremo-  
ies, and beliefs as the tribes of the  
st, and therefore do not represent  
em. They objected most vehement-  
to the Pan-Indian movement's view  
at all Native American remains are

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Photo: J. Loya

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☐ The Gambia

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☐ Inner Cities (US)

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☐ Mali

☐ Philippines

☐ Somalia

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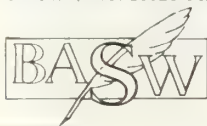
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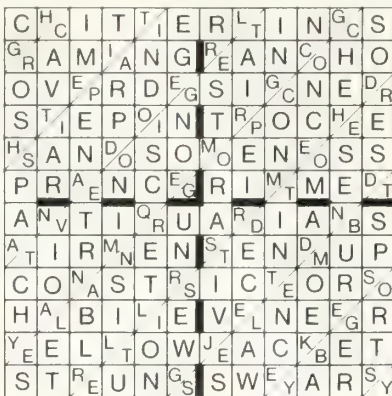
sacred, even those taken from the sand-year-old burial grounds.

To my mind, these objections to the point. Anthropologists, under other circumstances, will be the first to tell you that cultures evolve. Moreover, it was the white man who forced Indians to adopt a new way of life, our way of life. The real issue, it seems to me, is that most Native Americans feel deeply about reburial, for whatever reason. It is not for us to judge the legitimacy of this feeling. "We're asking for is a little common decency," said Walter Echo-Hawk of the Native American Rights Fund. "We're not asking for anything but bury our dead." It is as simple, and complicated, as that.

## February Index Sources

1 U.S. Conference of Mayors (Washington); 2 Manufactured Housing Institute (Arlington, Va.); 3 U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency; 4,5 Department of Energy; 6,7 A.H. Senfeld, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (Berkeley, Calif.); 8 CIA, *International Energy Statistical Review*; 9 First Bank Corp. (N.Y.C.); 10 Drexel Burnham Lambert (N.Y.C.); 11 James K. Rand Corp. (Santa Monica); 12 *National Law Journal* (N.Y.C.); 13 National Association for Perinatal Addiction Research and Education (Chicago); Larry Bumpass, University of Wisconsin (Madison); 15 Incurable Romance (N.Y.C.); 16 John McAfee, Computer Virus Industry Association (Santa Clara, Calif.); 17 Joel Yudken and Barbra Monds, Association for Computing Machinery (N.Y.C.); 18,19 American Council on Education (Washington); 20,21 National Center for Health Statistics (Hyattsville, Md.); 22 Broward County Medical Examiner (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.); 23 Florida Department of State, Division of Licensing (Tallahassee); 24 *El Tiempo* (Bogota); 25 General Accounting Office; 26 GAO Organization (Princeton, N.J.); World Health Organization (N.Y.C.); 28,29 Family Health International (search Triangle Park, N.C.); 30 K. Champagne Cellars (Guerneville, Calif.); 31 Coca-Cola Company (Atlanta); Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes (Arlington, Va.); 33 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (N.Y.C.); 34 NASA; 35 U.S. Congressional Research Service; 36 Sher Schwartz (Beverly Hills); 37 MGM Television Research (Los Angeles); Cheryl J. Lewin Associates (Chicago); BMI (N.Y.C.); 40 Steve Jenne (Springfield, Ill.).

## SOLUTION TO THE JANUARY PUZZLE



### NOTES FOR "ONE IN THREE"

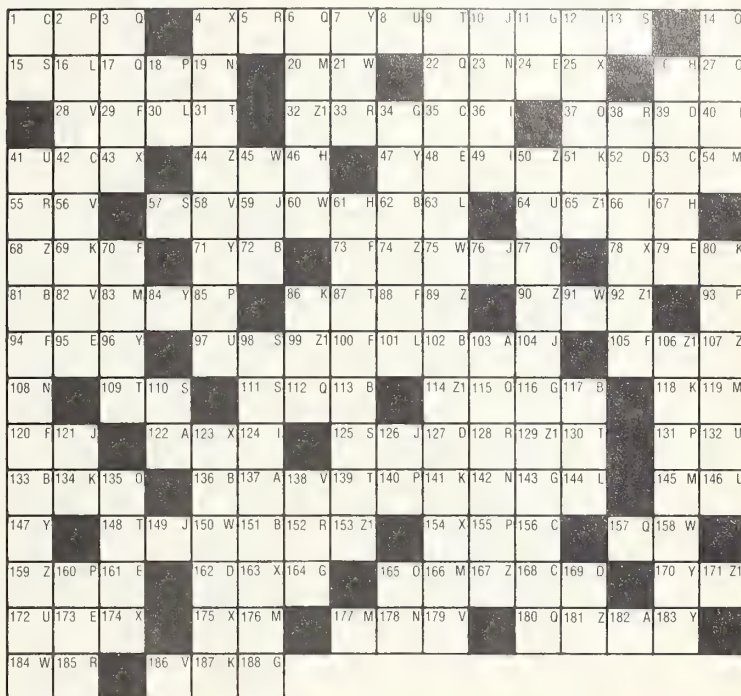
ACROSS: 1. CHITTERLINGS, anagram; 13. GA(M)ING; 14. RANCHO, hidden; 15. O(VER)DESIGN, anagram; 16. NO PETS, reversed; 17. T(ake)-ROCHE(anagram); 18. HANDS(O)MENESE, anagram; 19. PRA(N)CE, anagram & Lit; 20. RIMMED, hidden; 21. A(NTI, anagram)QUARIANS; 28. AIR(ME)N, anagram; 29. S-END-UP; 30. CO(N-STRICT)ORS; 31. HA-BILE; 32. VE(NEE)R, reversal of NEE; 33. YE-L(OW-JACK)ET; 34. ST(AR)ING; 35. S(W)EAR'S. DOWN: 1. CROSS-PATCHES; 2. C-AVIAR(y); 3. IMPENETRABL(anagram)-E; 4. TAR-P-ON; 5. INDISCRETION, anagram; 6. GONG-GE, reversed; 7. RESTORATIVES, anagram; 8. TAIPEI, "Thai pay"; 9. INCONTINEN(anagram)-C(ute)Y; 10. N(ONCO, anagram)M; 11. CHE(ES)BURG, anagram; 12. SO-REST; 22. VIOLET, anagram; 23. IN SITU, anagram; 24. U-N(S)IEWS; 25. DEC-LAW; 26. AM(O)EBA, anagram; 27. SP(ORT)Y

SOLUTION TO JANUARY DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 73). ALISTAIR COOKE: THE AMERICANS. I heard a . . . psychiatrist declare that his two-year-old was already talking. But . . . he said: "Children of his age group don't usually verbalize at this stage." Especially if there's a verbalizing sibling in the family situation. A gabby brother, that is.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 74, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by February 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the March issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 72 are Wayne Thomas, Sacramento, California; Irene Greiner, San Diego, California; and Martin Boltizar, Denville, New Jersey.



# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 74



by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each tells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 76.

## CLUES

## WORDS

1. Type of armor

182 122 137 103

2. Drunkard

81 136 113 102 62 151 133 117  
72

3. Military engineer (1788-1864) after whom a fort in N. Y. harbor was named

42 1 53 156 168 35

4. Cautious

127 52 162 169 39

5. Eng. anatomist (1578-1657), discoverer of circulation of the blood

48 24 79 173 95 161

6. Urban district of SE Wales, birthplace of Aneurin Bevan (2 wds.)

120 100 73 105 94 29 70 88

7. Carelessness, negligence

188 34 116 11 143 164

8. Licentious, debauched

67 61 26 46

9. Filled; made of money

66 49 40 36 12 124

10. Champagne center on the Marne River

149 121 126 10 76 59 104

11. Holding back, delaying by evasion

118 86 80 187 69 141 134 51

12. Striking show, ostentatious display

144 16 30 101 63 146

13. Cast aside; discharge; emit (2 wds.)

119 177 176 83 145 20 166 54

14. N. Contains; hinders, stays put

23 178 108 19 142

15. O. Mentally confused; rotten

165 14 135 37 27 77

16. P. Hazy, indistinct

18 93 131 2 140 155 160 85

17. Q. Miserable, pitiable, distressed

22 3 17 157 180 112 115 6

18. R. Full, rich, clear (of speech, voice, etc.)

38 33 128 185 55 5 152

19. S. Am. author (1885-1957; *Rabble in Arms*, *Northwest Passage*)

98 110 125 15 57 111 13

20. T. Great joy

148 130 31 139 109 87 9

21. U. Stretch out ungracefully

8 97 132 172 64 41

22. V. Movable article of property

28 138 186 82 179 58 56

23. W. Large South American bird

75 45 91 150 155 21 60 184

24. X. Person of no importance

163 175 154 174 123 78 4 25

25. Y. Contrary, refractory

170 47 7 183 71 147 84 96

26. Z. Up and about

68 11 159 50 157 44 157 114

27. ZI. Crystalline alkaloid also called corynine

92 99 171 106 129 32 65 114

153

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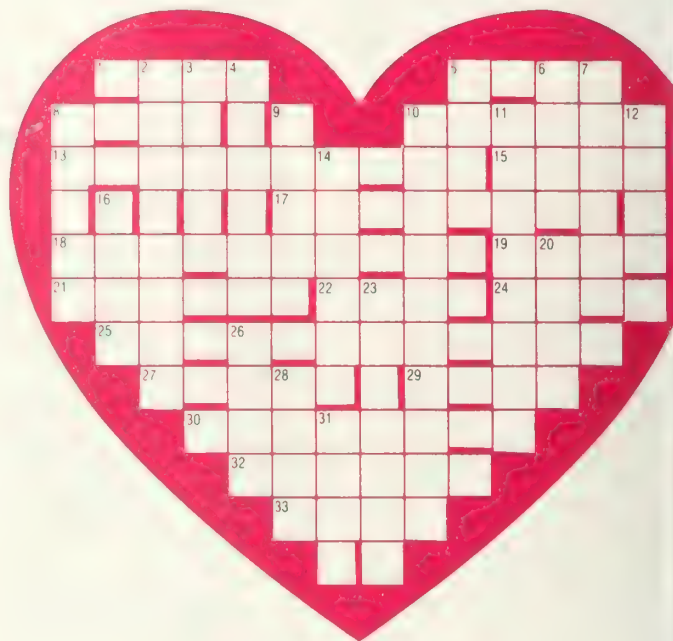
# PUZZLE

## Hearts & Embraces

by E.R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

**E**ach clue consists of a normal two-part cryptic clue plus a definition (only) of the light (diagram entry). The light is either the heart (such as LOVE from CLOVER) or the embrace (VANE from VALENTINE) of the normally clued answer. There are eighteen of each variety. The definition of the light may be placed at the beginning or end of the clue, or between the two parts of the cryptic clue. Lengths of clue answer and light are given in parentheses.

Clue answers include an uncommon word (32A), a common phrase, and a proper name that produces a proper name as the light. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 76.



### Across

1. Fish egg beginning to turn in cutter? (8/4)
5. Impulse to go with Dot without intravenous injection (6/4)
8. Penitent ballcarrier and thrill queen (6/4)
10. The converted reveal it: experience, once again, is not absolute (8/6)
13. Ready-to-broadcast tape about ten returning exiles goes on and on (11/10)
15. One bed in Paris, dark one (5/4)
17. Some of the student body drinks—Dotty ferments hers (12/8)
18. Embassy staffs church offices with misguided clerical sheen (13/10)
19. Here's the idea, creep: hit the kid on the head (10/4)
21. Carroll character babbles—rewrite a stretch (8/6)
22. English queen, on eating out, is a heroine to the Greeks (8/4)
24. Fresh Carol, turned on by a little speed? (5/4)
25. Discounts disparaging remarks disturbing ride into space (13/12)
27. Small building number invested in . . . luck has changed . . . error . . . get rid of the bonds (9/5)
29. Pout during exam, or guess where the reference files are (6/4)
30. They snatch some cocktails, as gross as bargain hunters (12/8)
32. Court finding goes through after mine, ruling it's a weasel (8/6)
33. Dull set heard sweet-sounding kind of song (6/4)

### Down

2. Doctor elects pair for clones, adds a new finish (10/8)
3. German I is ruffling temper and headaches (9/5)
4. A very quiet lease freezes a joint . . . it's to be attractive learning experience (14/6)
5. Network program such as *Jeopardy* could give me gas—and how! (4, 4/4)
6. With God-given grace, blow up 80% of vinylidene plant (8/4)
7. English study about sin? Quite the contrary! Show proof (8/6)
8. Get to snoop around leaders of early American church . . . it's awfully instructive! (7/5)
9. He's in for the long haul to increase real profit when playing with energy (11/5)
10. Court statements anger treasury agents trapped by gifts (12/10)
11. Largely vigilant at first, left uranium in, ominously glowing (12/8)
12. Drafts of small sailboats impress (8/4)
14. Military, lodging obstruction, strains rice liquor (8/6)
16. Fish cookie having not enough sustenance (10/4)
20. Artillerymen . . . nobody from unit wearing preservers (10/4)
23. Photograph tart on street in diapers. Most stylish (9/7)
26. Ecstasy's seldom found in end of affair—tear up, tearing (7/4)
28. Can advertisement about Republican joker lie (6/4)
31. Obscenities possibly rattle bus man in convertible (12/4)

**Contest Rules:** Send completed diagram with name and address to "Hearts & Embraces," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the April issue. Winners of the December puzzle, "Moving Parts," are Cornelius H. Marx, New York, New York; Herbert Fish, Napa, California; and Mark H. Haller, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



MARCH 1989

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*By Jonathan Schell*

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Gang Life in Los Angeles as Explained by

*Li'l Monster      Rat-Neck*

*Tee Rodgers      B-Dog*

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# LETTERS

## Soviet Response to Defense Forum

I read with interest the forum "What Is Ours to Defend?" [July 1988], in which Admiral Gene R. La Rocque sets forth his views on the defense requirements of the United States in the 1990s.

In our view, the ideas in the article provide an objective reflection of the realities of the modern world and are in accord with the new thinking in military-political issues.

A number of proposals spell out the need to reduce the United States' armed forces and to withdraw them from other countries. The proposals also expose the invalidity of the "forward defense strategy" and demonstrate the necessity of maintaining defenses at a lower level. These proposals are in many ways consistent with the precepts of our military defense doctrine and our armed forces posture, both of which rest on the principle of defensive sufficiency. We are already taking measures to make our European force posture of less concern to the Western countries. In his December 7, 1988, speech to the UN General Assembly, Mikhail Gorbachev declared that the Soviet armed forces would be significantly reduced. Of course, complete realization of the defensive-sufficiency principle is possible only on the basis of reciprocity.

*Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.*

As for reducing or withdrawing troops from foreign territories, the Soviet Union has long advanced the idea of eliminating foreign bases, returning home all troops stationed abroad.

I believe that Admiral La Rocque's overall attitude is constructive; nuclear weapons, if used, could result in global catastrophe.

However, I cannot agree with some of his ideas and views. First, the concept of "nuclear deterrence" implies only a reduction of nuclear weapons to a certain level, rather than complete elimination. This concept originated during the Cold War; in its essence, it is contradictory and dangerous. Indeed, it is illogical to declare that a nuclear conflict would be a disaster for all and simultaneously advocate maintaining nuclear weapons as a means to ensure peace.

Another unsupportable argument is that the United States needs nuclear weapons to deter a Soviet nuclear attack. The Soviet Union seeks the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, but while these weapons continue to exist, we have assumed before the whole world—an obligation not to be the first to use them. The United States, incidentally, has not done this.

Nor can I accept Admiral La Rocque's position that peace can allegedly be secured through the threat of nuclear retaliation. Our approach is totally different: Peace can only be preserved through a comprehensive system of international security that calls for the complete elimination on earth of both nuclear



other types of weapons of mass  
ruction.

General Dmitri Yazov  
Minister of Defense, USSR  
Moscow

General La Rocque replies:

I agree with General Yazov: Nuclear  
deterrence is a fatally flawed policy  
that the United States should abandon  
as soon as possible. General Ya-  
zov is right that a stable, peaceful  
relationship between our two coun-  
tries cannot be based on the threat of  
nuclear attack. But with more than 12,000 strategic nuclear  
weapons in the United States and  
50,000 in the USSR, we are not going  
to change four decades of Cold War  
policies overnight. America could get  
rid of three-fourths of its strategic  
heads and still pursue a policy of  
nuclear deterrence. The Soviet Union  
could do the same.

I suspect that if current improve-  
ments in U.S.-Soviet cooperation and  
understanding continue, by the twenty-  
first century we will no longer  
pay so much attention to our nuclear  
armaments. Weapons will become  
central to our relationship as both  
countries get on with the business of  
living. Tough economic, social, and  
environmental problems constructively.  
Nuclear deterrence may simply  
be away.

## Arguing Over Altamont

In "History Outside of History"  
readings, December 1988], Greil  
Marcus calls for high standards in  
writing about the past, yet makes  
statements about the murder at the  
1969 Rolling Stones' concert in Alta-  
mont that seem to include—to one  
who witnessed the events in ques-  
tion—factual errors, statements that  
even, in Marcus's words, "an ob-  
scure perversion."

Marcus describes the killing of  
Aldrich Hunter, a black teenager, as  
"cold-blooded murder." I saw the at-  
tack on Hunter and what preceded it.  
I believe he died not because of his  
proximity to the stage but because he  
had his white date stood too close  
to a Hell's Angel. When the Angel  
killed him away, not so much to



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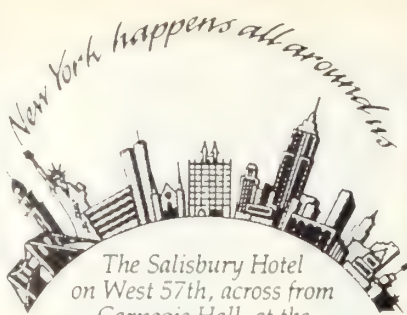
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keep Hunter from the stage as to dance himself from the sight of potential miscegenation, Hunter made the fatal error of pulling a gun. However that may be, nobody stabbed Hunter until he pulled his gun. I saw happen.

To read nearly twenty years later yet another entirely original version or perversion, of what I observed (and in such a context—followed by the words, "That is what actually happened") blows, as we used to say in the Sixties, what's left of my mind.

"History is finally a matter of countability," Marcus preaches in conclusion, yet he demonstrates the accuracy of Henry Ford's observation that "History is bunk."

Stanley Booth  
Brunswick, Ga.

Stanley Booth is the author of *Dance With the Devil: The Rolling Stones & The Times*, which includes an account of the tamo concert.

Greil Marcus replies:

My friend Stanley Booth is surely right that Meredith Hunter was tacked because of his white girlfriend. As to the circumstances of the killing itself, my description was based on testimony, first published in *Rolling Stone* and later repeated in court, an eyewitness who stood next to Hunter near the stage, followed him in flight into the crowd, and attended him as he died. This account is the most detailed and convincing of many reports I have encountered, and it still seems the most credible.

## Unearned Soul

I read Robertson Davies's essay ["Signing Away Canada's Soul," *January*] with a certain skepticism. When I think of that country, I remember the Canadian family I met on a trip in Germany last summer. Every member, down to the smallest child, wore a shining maple-leaf pin. Each case was covered with Canadian stickers. Were these Canadians imitating what Davies terms the "exported" culture of America? When they, I inquired, "bearing their Canadian national identity?"

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make it clear that we're *not* Americans, eh? What with all these terrorists about, you've got to be careful."

This scene recurred again and again when I met Canadians in Europe, and it is emblematic of Canadians' devalued nationalism. They enjoy a patriotism of convenience when they boast about such achievements as their national health system—something they can afford because America pays the political and economic price for the defense of the free world.

Canadians like Davies want to have their cake and eat it too. When Canada can articulate a more noble, mature national consciousness, then perhaps it will receive the respect that Davies so desperately wants.

David Saenger  
Cambridge, Mass.

Perhaps the obscurity of Canada's soul is not the fault of American culture but the result of Canada's inability to acquire a national spirit through some galvanizing, historic act. Canada never achieved nationhood; in-

stead, it was eased out the door into independence like a thirty-year-old child by its British mother. Not only did apron strings have to be cut, but the poor country was still suckling. Even as recently as 1965, when Canadians gave up their British-looking flag for the botanical banner they now fly, the agony was deep and vehemently expressed.

I don't know what characterizes Canadian culture, and Davies wasn't very enlightening—just worrisome and paranoid. So, though I've liked nearly all the Canadians I've met, I still wonder who they really are.

David G. Darby  
Duluth, Minn.

Most Canadians, like their American neighbors, want economic security. A national soul plus \$1.50 will get them a bowl of pea soup in most restaurants in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and points in between.

As for the Russian national soul, which Davies holds up as an example, it never did the Russians any good.

All it ever won for them was susta-  
tyranny.

Eduard Kalmowski  
Portland, Conn.


## A Censor on Censorship

Censorship ["Inside MI6," December 1988], in any form, is often too lightly by those who treasure freedom of expression.

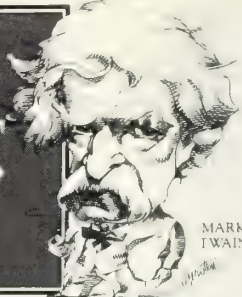
As a U.S. censor during World War II, I was engaged in almost every phase of civilian and military censorship from coast to coast. I also served as a press censor.

It was painful for me to cut up letters from G.I.'s to wives and sweethearts and to delay the delivery of messages to and from the sick and dying because of suspected hidden information that might harm the war effort. I scanned missives for messages in secret ink or microdots and warned travelers at airports and borders solely on conjecture.

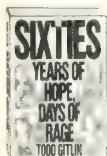
In time of war, censorship is an essential evil, used as a provisory, de-



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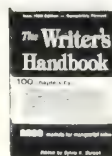
170. A triumph of lucidly written popular history. *Savvy Publishers Weekly*  
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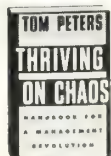
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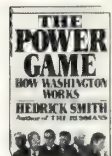
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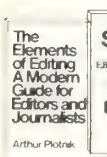
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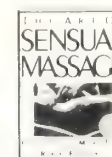
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[illegible]

# NOTEBOOK

## Multiple choice By Lewis H. Lapham

*In large states public education will always be mediocre, for the same reason that in large kitchens the cooking is usually bad.*

Nietzsche

**T**he bulletins from the nation's educational frontiers continue to read like the casualty reports from a lost war. At least twice a month, and sometimes as often as once a week, yet another eminent committee publishes yet another melancholy communiqué about the defeat of the American schools. The witnesses tell mournful stories and cite gloomy statistics—about the poll showing that one-quarter of the adults interviewed were ignorant of the news that the earth revolves around the sun, about the majority of high-school seniors (93 percent) unprepared for college science courses, about the 70 million functional illiterates unable to read the Constitution or a complicated menu, about the high-school girl who thought the Holocaust was a Jewish holiday.

All the authorities agree that conditions keep going from bad to worse, and they worry, in solemn and poorly made prose, about the school system's failure to deliver "high-quality product to the infrastructure," about the inability of the next generation to operate the nation's political and economic machinery. Without notable exception they say that unless the kids settle down to their lessons, the United States could lose it all—the ball game and the farm, the Nobel Prizes as well as the cruise missiles, the stock options, the Pizza Huts, and the condos in North Miami Beach.

I have been listening to this familiar dirge for more years than I care to remember—certainly since the National Commission on Excellence in Education noticed, in 1983, the "rising tide of mediocrity" inundating the

country's classrooms—and I have labored through the heavy documents about declining verbal aptitudes and moral standards, about ESL, ETS, and SAT, about programs for the gifted, the poor, the foolish, the out-numbered, and the inept. But, try as I might, I cannot discover in myself the proper attitude of pious alarm. I listen to the chorus of lamentation, and I think of Buddhist priests beating ornamental gongs, of feathered shamans waving moleskin rattles at the evil spirits whom they mean to chase back into the forest, of Stanford professors in the studio audience of the Oprah Winfrey show holding up great books (as if they were silver crosses) in the face of the great vampire, television.

My lightheartedness follows from my conviction that the American school system over the last twenty-five years—far from having failed—has proved itself a roaring success. The award of a passing or failing grade depends on how one answers the prior questions about the nature and purpose of an American education. What is it reasonable to expect of the schools? Why do people go to school for sixteen years? To learn what?

For my part, I assume that American students do not go to school to acquire wisdom, to understand the literatures of antiquity and the loom of history, or to acquaint themselves with what the ancient Greeks admired as "the glittering play of wind-swift thought." They go to school to improve their lot, to study the arts of getting ahead in the world, to acquire the keys to the commercial kingdom stocked with the material blessings that constitute our society's highest and most heavenly rewards.

These objectives conform to the popular theory of democracy. As Americans, we make the heroic attempt to educate all our citizens, to

provide as many people as possible with as many opportunities as possible, to do for our children what we couldn't do for ourselves. The system is as generous as it is romantic. Appreciated in its moral and social character, the American school system deserves to be ranked as the eighth wonder of the world. As late as 1937, Albert Jay Nock, an otherwise skeptical critic of the American pretension to the higher learning, was moved to a feeling of awe. He described the country's schools as "an expression . . . an organization—truly noble, selfless and affectionate desire."

That desire entails—unhappy and by definition—a corollary lowering of standards. Because the school serves a political idea (as opposed to an intellectual idea), they cannot allow to make invidious comparisons between the smart kids and the dumb kids, between the kids who read Shakespeare's plays and those who read the adventures of Spider-Man. Under the rules of democratic procedure, the schools must teach everything to everybody (morals, hygiene, Plato's dialogues, the forward pass, macramé, the curveball, Marxism, cheerleading, table manners, and calculus); even more wonderful, they must insist on the official fiction not only that everybody deserves to be educated but also, *mirabile dictu*, that everybody can be taught the same syllabus.

Translated into the measures of knowledge or talent or intellect, the proposition is plainly false—comparable to imagining that everybody can learn to write as well as Jefferson, or compose equations as brilliant as those of Einstein. But, translated into the measures of worldly success, the proposition is demonstrably true.

Certainly it is not necessary to be well educated to make a success



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## The "New" PLO Or: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?

After more than 20 years of ostracism by most of the civilized world, Yasir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, has finally uttered the "magic words" demanded by the U.S. It didn't come easy, and he didn't get it quite right. But it was good enough for Secretary of State George Schultz who, "the words" having been spoken, declared the willingness of the U.S. to talk with the PLO. One wonders whether that surprising opening will bring peace in the Middle East any closer to realization.

### What are the facts?

■ Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, having wrung major concessions from Israel, promised that the U.S. would not deal with the PLO unless it fulfilled two conditions: (1) it would accept U.N. Resolutions 242 and 238; (2) it would recognize Israel's "existence". Congress added a third condition, namely that the PLO would renounce terrorism. Finally, after 20 years of obdurate resistance, Yasir Arafat, as spokesman for the PLO, did make those statements. Secretary Schultz decided therefore that the U.S. must establish contact with the PLO. Only a week earlier, the Secretary had refused Arafat a visa to enter the United States, because of his personal association with and personal responsibility for widespread terrorism all over the world.

■ What are the goals of the PLO, and is it likely that they have changed by the uttering of those three sentences? The PLO is a terror organization, created in 1964 by the Arab League. It has only one aim: the destruction of the State of Israel through force and violence. Any apparent deviation from this single-minded aim is a temporary tactical maneuver.

■ The basic charter of the PLO is the so-called "Palestinian National Covenant." Its main theme is that the State of Israel has no right whatever to exist. It states clearly that "Palestine...is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland," and that "the Arab-Palestinian people...reject all solutions that substitute for the total liberation of Palestine." Those PLO and Arab leaders who have from time to time ventured to propose a less inflexible approach have invariably paid with their lives for such deviation from PLO "orthodoxy".

■ The recent unilateral declaration by the PLO of a "Palestinian State with its capital in Jerusalem" on territory administered by and under control of Israel is an attempted step in that direction. The PLO was founded long before Israeli administration of Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza Strip. Its avowed purpose was then, has always been and continues to be, not the establishment of a Palestinian state, but the destruction of Israel proper.

Can the leopard change its spots? It does not seem likely. And it does not seem likely that the PLO, engaged in unrelenting terror since its creation 24 years ago, could suddenly become a factor for peace, just because of the intonation of a few "magic phrases". It is comforting to think that peace in the Middle East can be achieved by bestowing respectability on the PLO. But the only way to bring about peace in the Middle East is by direct negotiations between Israel and representatives of the residents of the administered territories, as agreed in the Camp David Accord: a period of autonomy, after which the final disposition and status of the territories will be decided by the people involved. The PLO cannot be a party to the peace process, because its charter calls for war and destruction and because terror and peace cannot exist together.

■ The PLO is the kingpin of international terror. It maintains a complex network of relations with all of the main terror organizations throughout the world. It has written a blood-spattered record of unrelenting terror. Some of their more "glorious" exploits: the mid-air explosion of a Swissair jetliner (47 dead); the attack on pilgrims and passengers at Ben-Gurion International Airport (26 dead, 76 wounded); the attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics (11 dead); attack on the Ma'alot school (24 dead, 62 wounded—mostly children); the hi-jacking of a passenger bus on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway (35 dead, 80 wounded); the coordinated shoot-outs at the Rome and Vienna Airports (16 dead); and the murderous attack on the Istanbul Synagogue, in which 21 worshippers were killed.

■ In their attacks against Americans, the PLO hand is suspected in many of the kidnappings of U.S. hostages. American citizen Leon Klinghoffer was brutally killed in the PLO ship-jacking of the *Achille Lauro*. Some of the most brutal PLO attacks against Americans have been against U.S. diplomats. In the Sudan, in 1973, two American diplomats, Ambassador Cleo Noel and Charge d'Affaires George C. Moore, were mercilessly machine gunned to death when blackmail demands were not met. *The Washington Post* reported on reliable evidence that Yasir Arafat personally was in charge of these executions. In 1976, Ambassador Francis Meloy, Jr. and Counselor Robert Waring were assassinated in Beirut, an attack widely believed to have been the work of the PFLP, a faction of the PLO. In March of 1988, a bomb-laden car was placed in front of the Hilton Hotel in Jerusalem in an attempt to assassinate Secretary George Schultz. There have been many bombings, hi-jackings, and terrorist attacks in virtually every Mid-East and European country, leaving countless dead and wounded. While the final verdict is not yet in, it is generally assumed by our government and by those who are investigating this terrible crime that one of the Palestinian factions patterned after and instructed by the PLO is responsible for the bombing of Pan Am flight #103, which cost over 270 mostly American lives.

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tend college for four years in or-  
to meet the right people and ac-  
e the right credentials, but little  
what is useful will be found in  
cs. Children learn by example as  
as by precept, and they have only  
look at Times Square and Dis-  
and—or consider the triumphs  
individuals as culturally bereft as  
ident George Bush, Madonna,  
Hope, and Donald Trump—to  
w that as a nation we care as little  
it the arts and humanities as we  
about the color of the rain in  
kent. The society bestows its re-  
ls on the talent for figuring a mar-  
not on the proofs of learning or  
subtlety of mind.

he tide of mediocrity flows into  
classrooms from the ocean that is  
society at large. I'm sure it's true  
relatively few high-school stu-  
ts can speak a foreign language or  
it to Czechoslovakia on a map; it's  
true that President Reagan was  
l-pressed to remember the prove-  
nce of the Civil War and that few  
erican ambassadors can speak the  
uage of the country to which they  
ght passage with money paid to a  
tical campaign. I'm sure it's true  
a great many college students  
t know how to diagram a sen-  
ce or write a decent paragraph; the  
e can be said of most American  
lawyers and television anchor-  
i. The society doesn't expect its  
ie stars or its statesmen or its busi-  
magnates to have read Dante or  
al or George Eliot. Nor does any-  
y imagine that the secretary of  
e will know much more of history  
n the list of dates printed in a  
h-grade chronology. If it becomes  
essary to display the finery of  
ning, the corporation can hire a  
chwriter or send its chairman to  
intellectual haberdashers at the  
en Institute. Education is a com-  
dity, like avocado soup or alligator  
es, and freedom of mind is a privi-  
available only to those who can  
rd it.

remember being introduced to the  
siding attitude at Yale University  
he 1950s when A. Whitney Gris-  
d, then president of the universi-  
welcomed the members of the  
hman class to Woolsey Hall and



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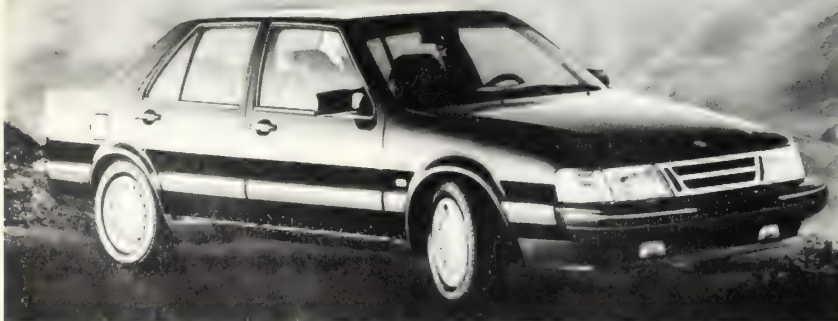
reminded us in his opening remarks the many feats of learning performed on our behalf by the venerable scholars whose busts could be seen standing on pedestals along the walls. Western civilization apparently had been acquired at some cost, and the class of 1956 had an obligation to maintain it in a state of decent repair.

As an intellectual proposition, Yale proved to be a matter of fit and form. Over a term of four years, the celebrities of the human sciences (Cicero, Montaigne, Goethe, et al.) put in guest appearances on the academic talk show, and the audience was expected to welcome them with rounds of appreciative applause. The producers holding up cue cards, the faculty identified those truths deserving of the adjective "great." The students who received the best marks were those who could think of the most flattering explanations for the greatness of the great figures and great truths.

Before the winter of freshman year, the students understood that the rituals of a Yale education would do little to do with the university's statements of ennobling purpose. An education was a means of acquiring cash value. Whatever the faculty or didn't say, what was important was the diploma, the ticket of admission to Wall Street, the professions, the safe harbors of the big money. I, an undergraduate I thought this was a coverly profound; it had a cynical ring to it, in keeping with the play of Bertolt Brecht then in vogue. The apprentice intelligentsia that frequented the United Restaurant on Chapel Street.

By the time I returned to Yale briefly in the autumn of 1978 to teach a seminar in journalism, I understood that what I had thought was cynicism was nothing more than common sense. Schools serve the social order, and, quite properly, promote the cultivation of its mind necessary to the perpetuation of that order. The education offered at Yale (as at Harvard, Princeton, and the University of Michigan) bears comparison to the commercial procedure for stunting caterpillars just prior to the moment of their transformation into adult moths. Silkworms can be turned to a pupa.

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corporation or the power of the

What I can tell by reading  
historical record, the practical  
American mind has always looked  
the affairs of the intellect with a  
deal of suspicion, in much the  
way that a banker looks upon a  
talking oil-well operator trying to  
win money for a deal in Calgary.  
Adams associated the arts with  
superstition and hoped they  
wouldn't be encouraged in the  
new republic. Benjamin Franklin  
on a similar line. "To America," he  
was setting the grain of American  
thought for the next 200 years, "one  
master is worth a dozen poets,  
the invention of a machine or  
improvement of an implement is  
important than a masterpiece of  
art."

It knows what's good for its  
heart, intellect in America always  
has the trouble to justify itself, like  
the Calvinist faithful, by its good  
deeds. The power of the imagination  
is well and good if held severely in  
check, if in its commercial aspect it  
shows some visible sign of improve-  
(preferably scientific or techni-  
cal) in its political aspect it serves  
the uplifting spirit of reform (usually  
referred to as a bureaucratic acronym),  
and in its artistic aspect it remains  
purely decorative (something that  
is framed in gold leaf or played on  
the piano).

One wishes that this wasn't so, and I  
also wish that the \$300,000 spent  
on the thirty-second television com-  
mercial (for face cream, say, or de-  
sire jeans) might be spent on books  
for school libraries. But wishing  
doesn't make it so, and until the society  
wishes to rearrange its order of prior-  
ities I suspect that much of the mon-  
ey allotted for education can be counted  
on to be distributed to the downward-  
mobile members of the clerical

and the children, meanwhile, will  
be as they always have learned in  
the United States—against long  
odds and despite the heavy atmo-  
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- Estimated value of U.S. stock taken off the market in 1988 due to mergers and acquisitions : \$131,000,000,000
  - Estimated value of all new stock issued in 1988 : \$22,000,000,000
- Portion of all corporate bonds currently outstanding in the United States that are junk bonds : 1/4
- Percentage of the world's stock-market capital accounted for by the shares of U.S. corporations : 29
  - Percentage accounted for by the shares of Japanese corporations : 44
- Number of the Pentagon's U.S. suppliers that were bought by foreign-owned companies in the first half of 1988 : 37
  - Amount the Pentagon will spend this year on new chemical weapons : \$60,400,000
  - Amount the Pentagon will spend this year to destroy obsolete chemical weapons : \$179,500,000
  - Percentage of the U.S. hazardous waste shipped abroad that goes to Canada : 90
- Estimated number of countries in which foreign aid accounts for more than a quarter of the national budget : 40
  - Amount Cuba earned last year from Western tourists : \$117,000,000
- Number of mayors in El Salvador who have resigned or been killed since last September : 47
- Rank of drugs, kidnapping, and car accidents, among the dangers to children most feared by parents : 1,2,3
- Percentage of Americans who say that pregnant women who smoke or drink should be liable for harm to the fetus : 48
  - Estimated number of women worldwide who die each year as a result of illegal abortions : 200,000
  - Estimated number of arrests of anti-abortion activists in the United States since 1987 : 12,000
  - Chances that a pregnant American woman will choose to have an abortion : 1 in 4
- Number of babies conceived in the United States last year with sperm from an anonymous donor : 30,000
- Percentage of Pittsburghers who named family members when asked which household pests they fear most : 1.3
  - Amount Americans spend each year to eradicate household pests : \$3,500,000,000
  - Estimated number of people who live in Manhattan subway stations : 840
- Amount of time it takes to ride the entire length of the New York City subway system, in hours : 30
  - Total length of all U.S. interstate highways, in miles : 44,328
  - Total length of all roads built during the Roman Empire, in miles : 49,000
  - Total distance driven each year worldwide, expressed in light-years : .5
- Price of equipping a car with a pair of onion-gas spray guns, from Labock Industries in Tel Aviv : \$960
  - Percentage of Iowa farmers who support an independent Palestinian state : 40
  - Percentage increase, since 1980, in U.S. consumption of potato chips : 67
  - Percentage of Americans who watch television during dinner : 50
- Amount antique dealer Malcolm Willits received from the sale of six secondhand Oscars in the last year : \$71,740
  - Percentage increase in garter belt sales at Frederick's of Hollywood since the release of *Bull Durham* : 15
- Percentage increase, since 1980, in average attendance at the Los Angeles Dodgers' spring-training games : 53
  - Price of an eleven-day ski trip to Antarctica, from Adventure Network : \$9,995
- Percentage of all the salt produced in the United States that is used to melt ice on roads : 45
  - Percentage of patients who like dentists to wear protective gloves "because of the taste" : 1
  - Price of Dr. Etiquette, an electronic bad-breath detector sold in Japan : \$130
  - Price of a five-minute collagen injection to fatten lips : \$300
- Average number of calories burned during an "extremely passionate" one-minute kiss : 26
  - Number of calories in a Hershey's Kiss : 25

*Figures cited are the latest available as of January 1989. Sources are listed on page 80.  
 "Harper's Index" is a registered trademark.*

# READINGS

[Memos]

## SIX (MORE) CRISES

*From From: The President—Richard Nixon's Secret Files, edited by Bruce Oudes and published by Harper & Row. In 1973, during the Watergate investigation, President Nixon created "Special Files" in which he kept personal and politically sensitive memos. In 1987, after years of legal battle, Nixon agreed to make most of the files public.*

DATE: June 16, 1969  
TO: Bob Haldeman  
FROM: The President

What is the situation with regard to redecoration of the Oval Office and the West Wing? Pending the decision, I would like something done immediately with regard to the George Washington painting over the fireplace. It should either be moved up or the clock should be moved out. I think the clock is probably not the most appropriate one for the room, even on a temporary basis. Check with Mrs. Nixon to see whether she has another clock in mind at this time, pending the time when the room is redecorated.

DATE: July 9, 1969  
TO: Rex Scouten  
FROM: The President

Regardless of who happens to be the guest, the President is served first. I do not like the custom and hereby direct that it be changed. The following rules will apply.

1. If it is a stag dinner or lunch with no guest of honor, the President will be served first.
2. If it is a stag affair with a guest of honor, the guest of honor will be served first and the President next.
3. If it is a mixed dinner with no guest of honor, Mrs. Nixon will be served first.
4. If it is a mixed dinner with a guest of hon-

or, the wife of the guest of honor will be served first simultaneously with Mrs. Nixon, and then the guest of honor and I will be served second.

If it is one of those rare occasions where it is a mixed dinner and the guest of honor is not accompanied by his wife, serve Mrs. Nixon first and simultaneously the woman who is assigned as my dinner partner, and then serve me and the guest of honor second.

These rules are to be followed explicitly from this time forward.  
cc: John Ehrlichman

DATE: March 2, 1970  
TO: Bob Haldeman  
FROM: The President

What happened to the Eisenhower cleats?

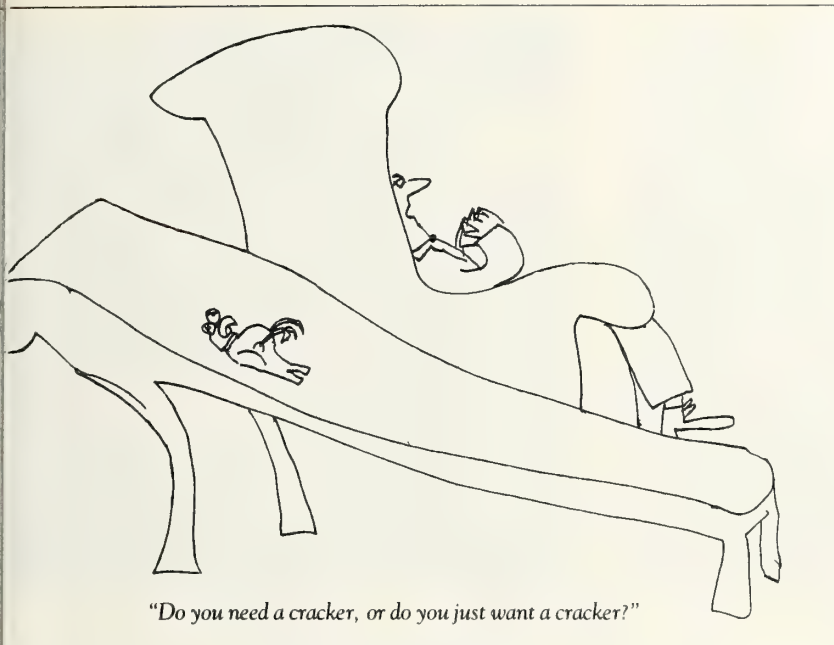
DATE: March 16, 1970  
TO: Mr. Haldeman  
FROM: The President

Would you please have the Bordeaux years checked? I know that '59 is an excellent year, even with my unsophisticated taste; but my recollection is that '66 is one of the poor years. The reason I ask is that we seem to have a huge stock of '66 Bordeaux on hand, and I wondered why. It may be that the real experts consider '66 to be a good year; but have it checked out. I would like to see, from a wine expert, what they consider to be the best years for French Bordeaux, starting with '59—which most consider to be the best year in the last twenty-five.

DATE: April 6, 1970  
TO: Bob Haldeman  
FROM: The President

I would like a quiet check made with regard to the chairs in the Cabinet Room, without saying anything to anybody else. I have a distinct feeling that these chairs, probably because of their style, are pretty uncomfortable. For one





"Do you need a cracker, or do you just want a cracker?"

From the Arizona Daily Star.

thing they do not leave enough legroom beneath the table and, as I told you before, at least insofar as my chair is concerned, it is stiff and hard and pretty uncomfortable after a meeting goes as long as an hour or more.

I realize that they represent a substantial investment, but a lot of important decisions will be made around that table and if my reaction is shared by others who have tried the chairs, perhaps we ought to meet the problem immediately and have them quietly rebuilt or exchanged for a different model. I emphasize "quietly"...

DATE: November 23, 1970  
TO: Bob Haldeman  
FROM: The President

I have a delicate matter which I would like you to work out with regard to John Mitchell. When I offered our Florida place to them I did not realize that Julie and David plan to go down there for the week before Christmas, which is the first time he will have off after his intensive indoctrination at Newport. Under the circumstances, I would like for you to get ahold of Bebe and see if he can arrange for them to have a really good villa at Key Biscayne. I know that is where Martha wants to go and she is always bugging us because she says they never give them a good villa. Bebe should use all the weight he possibly can to get this villa for them. Once that is done then you can call John and tell him of the mix-up and express our regrets.

[Memo]

## BEWARE THE EXPLODING FALAFEL

From a U.S. Information Agency internal memorandum recently obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Shortly after this memo was written the agency began a two-year campaign to persuade District of Columbia officials to force Mohammad Nassiri, the vendor referred to below, to relocate. A 1987 U.S.I.A. letter to a city official described "vendor operations" as "harmful to the national interest" and pointed out that "vendors' tables and other equipment could be used to hide explosive devices." Despite the personal intervention of U.S.I.A. director Charles Z. Wick, the city took no action.

DATE: January 8, 1986  
FOR: William A. Catterson  
FROM: Samuel R. President  
SUBJECT: Food-Vendor Location

On Wednesday, January 8, 1986, at 10:28 A.M., Mr. James C. Pollock, program manager of the International Political Relations Staff, discussed his concern about a food vendor who has established his trailer-type food stand on the sidewalk, directly in front of the main entrance of the U.S. Information Agency.

Mr. Pollock stated that the vendor, positioned in front of the building eight (8) hours

each day, Monday through Friday, commencing at 8:00 A.M., can observe the movements of the director, official visitors, agency personnel, and can also familiarize himself with the garage access routine.

Mr. Pollock believes that the vendor's name could be of Palestinian or Middle Eastern origin.

*Recommendation:* That [the security office] investigate food-vendor location as a possible threat to personnel or physical security.

[Letters]

## CALL ME THE HUNTER

*From a recent exchange of letters between Teresa L. Gibbs of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, in Washington, and Ted Nugent, the rock star.*

November 15, 1988

Dear Mr. Nugent,

We have received several letters from our members and your fans about a recent article in *Star* magazine describing your hunt and slaughter of a black bear.

As you point out in the article, there is no ethical difference between killing a bear and killing a cow, pig, or chicken. I would like to point out that killing any animal for reasons of taste, sport, or luxury is wrong. I am hopeful that, upon reflection, you will be eager to switch to a more humane, healthy pastime such as hunting down and collecting wild vegetables and fruits, hiking, or taking photographs of animals, such as bears, in their natural habitats.

Hunting is an extremely cruel and senseless form of "recreation." The stress that it causes animals—the noise, the fear, and the constant chase—is nothing less than a form of psychological torture. Those animals who are hunted but escape suffer from stress-related disabilities that reduce their ability to eat properly and store the fat and energy needed to survive the winter. The death of an animal is also devastating to his or her family, particularly when young are involved.

Although the flesh of a dead bear does not contain the high levels of hormones, antibiotics, and pesticides that are found in the flesh of factory farm animals, all meat does contain unhealthy levels of fat and cholesterol, which are responsible for most cases of cancer, heart disease, hardening of the arteries, strokes, arthritis, muscular dystrophy, and myriad other

life-threatening human illnesses. Studies of vegetarian societies and sects have concluded that a meatless diet not only promotes a longer life but enhances the quality of life. Since meat is not only unnecessary for our survival but a major health risk as well, we cannot justify the slaughter of animals simply for reasons of taste or sport.

I am enclosing some information that I hope you find interesting. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us. Meanwhile, I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Teresa L. Gibbs

December 2, 1988

Dear Teresa,

I don't know how often you leave beautiful downtown D.C., but you obviously rarely leave the pavement. I've spent a lifetime out-of-doors with real wildlife, and it disturbs me whenever someone makes a detrimental judgment based on a make-believe emotional belief.

Killing animals is not wrong. It is certainly part of the real world. God does it. Mother Nature does it. Animals do it. And man does it. An ounce of common sense would show you the importance of death in the wild. But you obviously don't really care about the animals or you would know firsthand the damage your fantasy would cause. Try going snowshoeing in an area with deer after a severe winter, and tell me how you like the mass, slow, lingering death as an alternative to a national harvest. You are a cruel bunch of liars.

You are wrong about stress. The animal world is designed for stress, man or no man. And sorrow to the animal's family? You really flashed your pathetic ignorance here. I've seen hundreds of doe and deer beat hell out of their fawns for a tidbit of food in the winter. The concept of family is ridiculous if you know that boar, bears, and male lions, more often than not, eat their young.

In regard to the consumption of animal flesh, man does, can, and will—justifiably—utilize animal flesh for food. Animal products are also wonderful for clothing and many other uses.

The information you sent was not interesting. As someone who has seen and experienced the truth, such nonsense only disgusts me.

Come on, Teresa, get your fat ass out of the office and let me take you along with my children and friends to the beautiful world of truth and experience.

Sincerely,  
Ted Nugent





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an article in the January issue of Audubon magazine on new methods scientists use to mark animals and insects being studied in the wild. A mouse is released after being coated with fluorescent powder, a technique developed by Patricia Freeman, a zoologist at the University of Alaska. The traces of powder left by the mouse are visible at night in ultraviolet light, allowing researchers to follow its path. The bee, at right, has a bar code shellacked on its thorax by Stephen Buchmann, an entomologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Using a laser scanner, Buchmann can identify the bee and trace its movements.

[Letter]

## DON'T AX THE MAYOR

*Excerpted from a letter written by New York City Mayor Edward I. Koch to Richard R. Green, the city's new Chancellor of Education.*

November 1, 1988

Dear Richard:

We all agree that it is absolutely essential for the children in this city to learn to read, write, do math, and speak English properly. This is a service town and our students will have to interact with the public in the jobs that will be available to them.

There are certain "New Yorkese" words that grate on the ears of everyone, and they mark the speaker as uneducated regardless of his or her intelligence, knowledge, and otherwise commendable educational background. I would like to suggest that you consider conducting a special one-hour seminar on the proper pronunciation of certain words and the elimination of certain phrases. Perhaps every teacher could be given an outline to follow and spend the first hour of a given day reviewing the material. I have asked my associates at City Hall to compile a list of the six most mispronounced words or

phrases as well as those that are otherwise objectionable because they are ungrammatical and lack syntax. Those words and phrases are:

- ☐ pronouncing the word "ask" as "ax."
- ☐ dropping the letter g from participles, e.g., "goin" instead of "going."
- ☐ pronouncing "picture" as "pitcher."
- ☐ improper use of the verb "to be," as in "we be going."
- ☐ use of "ain't" instead of "isn't."
- ☐ improper use of personal pronouns, as in "she sent it to you and I."

My suggestion does not come without some history. On the last day that I met with my adopt-a-class last year, I told the students that they will have to learn to read, write, do math, and speak English properly if they are going to get a first-rate job and be a success. I told them there was one word that will mark them as uneducated. And then I asked if anyone knew what that word was. A young girl raised her hand and said, "The word is ax." I asked her how she knew that was the word. She said, "Because that was the first thing you said to us when we met you for the first time." I laughed and asked her if she could pronounce the word properly. She said, "Yes, it is ask." I asked the other students if they could pronounce it properly, and they all did. I felt terrific. By simply raising that one word on an earlier occasion, I had focused

[Equations]

## ROCKMATH

*From Rock and Roll Equations and More Rock and Roll Equations, pamphlets published by the Clambake Press, in Brooklyn, New York. The equations were written by Dave Abramson.*

Miles Davis ÷ Oscar the Grouch = Johnny Mathis

Chubby Checker ÷ Vanilla Fudge = Morey Amsterdam

The Cramps - Lux Interior + Huey Lewis = The Blasters

Buddy Holly - Buddy Holly = Paul Anka

Iggy Pop - Ray Bolger = Bob Denver

Charles Nelson Reilly + Sun Ra = Billy Ocean

Napoleon + Shemp Howard = Jerry Lee Lewis

George Harrison + Porky Pig = Cat Stevens

Cyndi Lauper + Phyllis Diller = Moms Mabley

Kraftwerk ÷ Grace Jones = Leo Gorcey

David Byrne - Bert Convy + Peter Tork = Mister Rogers

Phil Rizzuto + Leslie Howard = Sting

Sam Cooke + Muammar Qaddafi = Michael Jackson

Devo ÷ Roy Orbison = the Maytag Repairman

Madonna × Zero Mostel = Grace Slick

Peter Lemonjello + Lux Interior = Art Shamsky

Jerry Garcia × Lords of the New Church = Meat Loaf

Joni Mitchell + Bullwinkle = Buffy Sainte-Marie

The Hollies + Fabian = R.E.M.

Norman Mailer ÷ Moe Howard = Bob Dylan

Shelley Duvall + Janis Ian = Suzanne Vega

Jerry Garcia - Neil Young = "Gabby" Hayes

Hermann Hesse ÷ Motörhead = James Taylor

A Flock of Seagulls + The Olympics = Pablo Cruise

George Harrison<sup>3</sup> = Abe Vigoda

Bruce Springsteen + Howdy Doody = John Cougar Mellencamp

Ritchie Valens × The Fat Boys = Los Lobos

Huey Lewis × Huey Lewis = The Hooters

Eric Burdon + Zsa Zsa Gabor = Rod Stewart

Little Richard - Muddy Waters = Marvin Hamlisch

Isaac Asimov + Paul Anka = Thomas Dolby

Muddy Waters + Tiny Tim = Prince

George Bush × Devo = Hank Williams Jr.

Buddy Holly + Arthur Fiedler = Brian Eno

U2 ÷ UB40 = William Devane

Yoko = Kreskin

their attention on something that I think is important, and I am sure you do as well. In a service town, students speaking with others every single day on the phone and in person must make a good impression, and that is not the impression they will make if they use these words and phrases.

You were present at Martin Luther King, Jr. High School last week when the opening ceremony was conducted regarding the High School Institute for Law and Justice. A young girl in the class was asked to read her essay. The content of her essay was excellent, but at one point she pronounced the word "ask" as "ax." I believe that everyone in the room recognizing the mispronunciation was distressed and, regrettably, the substance of her essay was [thus made] less important.

I would appreciate your letting me know what your thoughts are on my suggestion. Thanks.

Sincerely,  
Edward I. Koch  
Mayor

[Article]

## TO BE BLACK, IN 'VOGUE'

*From "To Be Black in February Is in Vogue, Gets You in Vogue," by Spike Lee. To commemorate black history month, Vogue magazine commissioned Lee to write an article for its February issue on the influence of black Americans on fashion. Lee wrote the piece below after seeing the photographs that were to accompany the article. The pictures included a woman wearing several gold chains and carrying a large portable radio. Vogue killed the piece. Lee's new movie, Do the Right Thing, will be released by Universal Pictures in July.*

**F**ebruary is the shortest month of the year. It couldn't be a coincidence that it was the month chosen to honor the contributions of black Americans to the U. S. of A. Nah, it couldn't be. So, Spike Lee, black filmmaker and this month's spokesperson for the race, is asked to write an article on how we blacks have influenced fashion.

We all know this influence doesn't pertain just to fashion. In fact, influence isn't an accurate word. We're the original originators. You have to look long and hard to find a field—art or sport—that we haven't turned inside out, upside down, and made our own.

But, hey, this is no revelation. This is really old stuff. Since the minute we got off the boat,



our stuff has been stolen. Now I don't mind the stealing part so much—everyone does a little borrowing. But when you make billions off our negritude and turn around and tell the world you created it all along, whoa, that's too much. To this day I can't stomach Elvis Presley. In New York City slang, there's a word to describe what Elvis and many others have done; that word is BITE. It means to copy, duplicate, emulate, imitate, a form of flattery. Well, there's been a whole lot of biting going on.

But back to fashion. It's been my observation that hip-hop culture has had the most influence (that word again) on fashion today. Hip-hop is not only a style of dress but a language and music (rap) created by New York City black and Hispanic youth. Now, these same youth also have to shoulder the blame for those ten-pound necklaces and medallions, one of the worst, most backward styles in history, only to be outdone by monster weaves, jerri curls, nose jobs, and blue/green contact lenses. The persons responsible, white or black, should be hung by their privates and shot with ten Uzis.

In closing, to be honest, the photos that accompany this article . . . what can I say? Is this what black Europeans are wearing now or what? Let me know, *Vogue*. Tell me something, 'cuz I've never seen this stuff on my friends or people in the street. We just ain't with it. (Although that studded bra is kinda dope—I could go for that.)

[Letter]

## COUNT DRACULA MAKES AN OFFER

*From a letter recently sent by Count Rainer Rene Adelmann von Adelmansfelden to West Germans whose names appeared in public bankruptcy records. The count's firm, the Association of Organ Donations and Mutual Human Substitution, located in West Germany, buys human kidneys for association members who need transplants. The firm pays as much as \$45,000 for a kidney. Translated from the German by Elliott Rabin.*

"It has been medically proven that you can live just as long with one kidney as with two."

Dear Bankrupt Person,

I have obtained your name from court documents. Your bankruptcy is a matter of public record, as is the fact that no one should do business with you, that no one can grant you credit, that the police probably have a file on you, and,



*From Animals' Agenda, a monthly magazine published by the Animal Rights Network, in Monroe, Connecticut.*

finally, that anyone who associates with you places himself under suspicion.

In our country the situation is much like it was in the Middle Ages, if perhaps more subtle and refined. In the eyes of the law, you are a leper. Though you are not physically ill, legally it is as if you have AIDS. The sophistication of our information and data systems enables everyone to be checked thoroughly for legal leprosy and insures that you, the leper, will be shunned.

Therefore, the most hideous carrion-vultures will pursue you now more than ever. The hungriest extortionists will entice you to borrow money and then will try to collect on this new debt. No one will protect you.

We are altogether different. If you don't want to get an illegal line of credit at a Spanish bank, if you do not want to embark on a life of crime, if you lack the courage for a burglary, bank robbery, or life abroad, then we have another solution for you to consider.

Join our association and we will open a bank account for you. Then, as soon as you donate a kidney to another member of the association, money will flow into your account, allowing you to pay yourself a modest salary or buy a car. You will again have a financial basis on which you can legally exist, unassailed.

There are people who have ruined both their kidneys at once through illness or the use of pills

or alcohol. They can no longer live. Let's not mince words about this. Here we make a transfusion: money for your preservation, a kidney transplant for the preservation of Croesus. You donate a kidney for the preservation of Croesus, Croesus pays a sum for your preservation. This simple deal, this simple reciprocity between two unacquainted people, who become comrades in the war against death, can save two human lives, or, at the very least, your own. Because even if the kidney recipient does not survive, you survive: medically and economically.

Our members have already deposited the money to buy a kidney. So, regardless of your blood type or rhesus factor, as soon as you donate your kidney you will receive the money from the association treasury. (You can also donate a kidney belonging to your wife or your relatives.) You will be able to work again at once. Your life will be saved, and the loss of a

kidney is consolable. As I have said, it in no way shortens your life! You receive the money necessary to establish a new business.

You don't have many options. Therefore I ask you to examine our offer impartially, even if it does appear somewhat unusual.

Surely it is a good thing to help save a life and at the same time receive a great reward.

—Count Adelman von Adelmansfelden

[Conference Program]

## CHEMICAL PEELS AND NASAL SAWS

*From the program for the World Congress on Cosmetic Surgical Rejuvenation of the Face, Body, and Extremities, held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, last October. The conference was sponsored jointly by the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery and the American Society of Liposuction Surgery.*

[Interview]

## CASTING PRESIDENTS

*From an interview with Gore Vidal conducted by Jon Wiener, which will appear in the Spring issue of Radical History Review. Vidal's most recent novel is Empire. Wiener is a professor of history at the University of California at Irvine.*

JON WIENER: Did you know Ronald Reagan in Hollywood?

GORE VIDAL: Yes and no. I've been at functions with him a dozen times. Hollywood is a very small place; he was active in television and I was active in television. In '59 I was casting *The Best Man* on Broadway, and MCA offered us Reagan to play the good guy, an Adlai Stevenson sort of presidential candidate. I said I just didn't think that Reagan would be very convincing as a presidential candidate. Instead we hired Melvyn Douglas. As a result Douglas's career was totally revived; he won every prize in sight and was a star from then until his death. Reagan, at that point, had nothing—he was a host on a TV program.

WIENER: So if Reagan had been cast in the lead of *The Best Man* . . . ?

VIDAL: Melvyn Douglas would have become president—a very good president. And Ron today would probably be touring in *Paint Your Wagon*.

### FRIDAY

- 11:30 A.M. "Use of Cheek Neck Flap in Facial Plastic Surgery": John R. Hilger, M.D.
- 11:45 A.M. "Removal of Eyeliner Pigmentation with an Argon Laser": Linda J. Kaplan, M.D.
- 1:30 P.M. "An Alternative Method for the Nasal Osteotomy Utilizing the Dual Plane Reciprocating Nasal Saw Blade": Vincent Giampapa, M.D.
- 1:45 P.M. Panel: "The Anticipation, Prevention, and Treatment of Complications of the Upper Third of the Face Surgery": Larry Schoenrock, M.D., moderator
- 2:15 P.M. Workshop: "How to Prevent a Lawsuit"
- 6:00 P.M. Cocktail Party, Grand Ballroom

### SUNDAY

- 8:55 A.M. "The Jessner's Peel, Trichloroacetic Peel—A Medium-Depth Chemical Peel": Gary Monheit, M.D.
- 9:20 A.M. "Macro Lipo-Injection: Large Quantities of Fat": Julius Newman, M.D.
- 10:25 A.M. "New Instruments for Scalp Reduction": Carlos J. Puig, D.O.
- 11:00 A.M. Coffee Break and Medical Exhibits, Grand Ballroom



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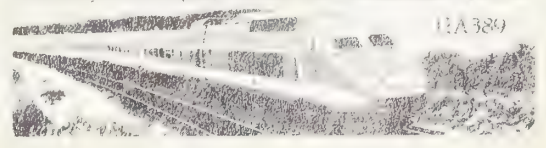
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[Essay]

## EAR CULTURE

From "Teaching Poetry," by Hugh Kenner. This essay appears in the collection *Teaching Literature: What Is Needed Now*, edited by James Engell and David Perkins, published by Harvard University Press. Kenner, who teaches poetry at Johns Hopkins University, is the author most recently of *A Sinking Island: The Modern English Writers*.

**B**y chance, a student mentioned her father's long-ago habit of reciting. Exposed to his declamations, she'd known by heart portions of *The Ancient Mariner* before she could read. I don't need to tell you that she's a superior student; and why do I not need to tell you that? Because, as I think you've readily intuited, there are things for which she was not dependent on a teacher: things teachers may or may never think to impart.

[Catalogue Copy]

### THE COURSE OF LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING

From the catalogue description for "How to Remember a Joke," a course offered at the Discovery Center, a continuing-education institute in New York City.

**H**ow many times have you heard a joke and not been able to remember it well enough to tell someone else? Wouldn't you like to learn in one evening a method that will have you remembering up to forty jokes at once? In this exclusive workshop, you'll learn a system to remember jokes, and you'll have plenty of laughs in the process. There will be opportunities for participation, and you'll receive a JOKE MANUAL to give you guidance after you leave the class. (A materials fee of \$5 is payable to the instructor. Bring your three favorite jokes to class!)

Sheindeleh, the course instructor, has performed comedy and conducted comedy workshops for several years.

Section A Thurs Jan 13      6:30-9:30 P.M.  
77th St. and Columbus Ave.      \$25

She'd needed no persuading, notably, about poetry's ancient mnemonic function. Enabled by rhythm, word clusters stick to the mind; hence Homer's Catalogue of Ships, in hexameters. Nor had anyone had to tell her how written language can engage the larynx, the mouth, the lungs, the torso, arms, hands—all that we feebly intend when we speak of "sound," a power to possess the body, alarming alike to Plato and to chartered accountants. (Possession is unacademic; it's like witchcraft.)

Students, not to mention colleagues, tend to be mystified by Robert Frost's claim that the sound of poetry is like what you hear of a conversation in the next room: a vocal tune lacking words, to which, optionally, "sense" may be fitted. Yeats's

"I am of Ireland,  
And the Holy Land of Ireland,  
And time runs on," cried she.  
"Come out of charity,  
Come dance with me in Ireland."

makes, as the late Basil Bunting liked to point out, very little in the way of paraphrasable sense.

Pound, composing, intoned inarticulate sounds; Wordsworth shouted nascent passages aloud to help himself shape them; Keats prized things proven "upon our pulses"; Sam Johnson made his verses pacing up and down. So *physical* an art; and D.H. Lawrence came at it from the right direction when he got his Croydon pupils all chanting in unison, "The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold," though from neighboring classrooms there were complaints about the din.

**A**nd here we are, facing a roomful of post-adolescents, seated before books all open to be looked at. They are lookers. They "scan" headlines, glance at T-shirts. Their eye culture is silent, abstract. Those who spell securely are bothered by funny spelling: "Busie old foole, unruly Sunne." Compassionate anthology editors "modernize." That's one stumbling block removed.

Look into one of them, for instance the Norton, and watch it wrestle with Arnold's line about the Sea of Faith, that once

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled

This difficult line means, in general, that at high tide the sea envelopes the land closely. Its forces are "gathered" up (to use Wordsworth's term for it) like the "folds" of bright clothing ("girdle") which have been compressed ("furled").

Lord, Lord, yes, mercy, we do need air, air. That is *not* the way to teach poetry, enforcing as it does whatever suspicion that poets just can't talk straight. More pertinent to adduce the shortage of rhymes with which English con-



fronts a poet when he wants to close his cadence with that satisfying mouthful, "world."

Generally, I read the lines out myself, with a force propelled by a heritage of Welsh preachers. Whatever I'm teaching, Donne's "The Sunne Rising" or Pound's *Cantos* or Joyce's *Ulysses*, I do much reading aloud. Whether it is exemplary reading or not, Laurence Olivier might well dispute; but it does have two advantages. It slows down the pace at which the students encounter the words. And it nudges them, continually, from eye to ear. Maybe, even, they parody me in the dorms. If so, they're beginning to vocalize.

Time enough, when they've gained some physical possession of the poem, to investigate effects of tone and diction. The great thing to get used to is poetry's slow way of letting meaning *emerge*. We'll not compress into an hour what can take centuries; much has still to emerge from Shakespeare.

Though in an hour the process can sometimes be glimpsed. Here's a seeming opacity:

Sound slender, quasi tinnula,  
Ligur' aoide: Si no'us vei, Domna don plus mi cal,  
Negus vezer mon bel pensar no val."  
Between the two almond trees flowering,  
The viel held close to his side;  
And another: s'adora".  
"Possum ego naturae  
non meminisse tuae!" Qui son Properzio ed Ovidio.

The opening of "Canto XX" disentangles itself but slowly from the sounding voice. "Sound slender"—and when you *sound* it—takes up at least as much time as "To be, or not to be, that is the question" and serves, what is more, to upset most received notions of scansion. Then "quasi tinnula"—quick, and like (so its words say) a little bell. Move on, to the intricacies of Provençal flowing into English, and affirm that by the time they've experienced that on their tongues they've moved closer than deconstruction will ever bring them to Eliot on poetry experienced before it is understood. Understanding, an available boon; yes, it does come; but after.

For observe that, with thirty-one of its forty-eight words drawn from alien lexicons, that wonderful vignette will reach monolingual ears as the pure interwoven senseless sound out of which, I'm asserting, much poetry gets drawn. If you'll not reject it out of incomprehension you can start tracing its weave. Meanings, as they get supplied, will fit in. As you gather sense, you gather the way a poet puts sense in, careful never to damage the tune. The strong poem survives its sense. You don't have to "understand" everything you read; and you'll never understand it wholly. That's one permanent lesson.

In our century we have the advantage of the poets' very voices, preserved. You can hear (in

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two versions) Yeats chanting "Innisfree," the way he annoyed a Boston lady so much she demanded to know why he read in that extraordinary fashion. On being told that he read as all true poets since Homer had read, she demanded to know how he knew that *Homer* had read in that extraordinary fashion. He replied that the ability of the man justified the presumption. Or you can hear Parson Eliot's peculiar dead intonation of "tubers," or Stevens reading "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven," carefully, like the fine print on a surety bond, or Basil Bunting doing *Briggflatts* in the authentic Northumbrian. Hearing such things can be a beginning of wisdom, for students uncowed by the acoustic presence. One thing the poet does know about his verse is how it sounded before it had all its words to distract us.

From time to time Basil did *Briggflatts* in public, all the way from the unchallengeable opening line,

Brag, sweet tenor bull

through the intricate middle, for instance,

As the player's breath warms the fipple the tone clears.

It is time to consider how Domenico Scarlatti condensed so much music into so few bars



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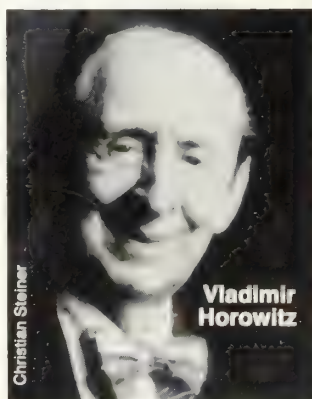
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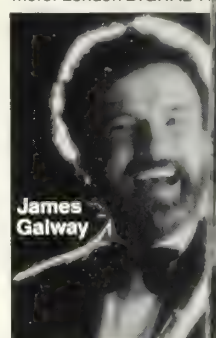
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with never a crabbed turn or congested cadence,  
 never a boast or a see-here; and stars and lakes  
 echo him and the copse drums out his measure,  
 snow peaks are lifted up in moonlight and twilight  
 and the sun rises on an acknowledged land

all the way to the muted end:

Who,  
 swinging his axe  
 to fell kings, guesses  
 where we go?

Those were ceremonious occasions, for which he wanted the full Persian ritual. In Persia the bard would sip at strong wine, poured him by a lissome girl, the *saqhi*. Away from Persia, it was necessary to make do. Once, in Orono, Maine, a chubby ten-year-old was conscripted to play *saqhi*. How was she to manage not to fidget? And pretend to adore the poetry? And be videotaped to boot? She *did not want to do this*. But in adolescence, in a school essay, she could say how it had been:

It was his voice, raspy, deep, purring, falling like water, that carried me away. . . . We were alone, he and I, in poetry. . . . a self-sufficient unit that read poetry and poured wine.

As it turned out, the reading lasted over one and a half hours. For me it was over in minutes. . . . I did not understand much of Basil's vocabulary, topics or historical allusions. His images utterly lost me. I did not know who he was. Yet we experienced something special. We travelled via poetry to places and images far away.

[Speech]

## TRANPOSED HAMLET

From "Six Avant-Garde 'Hamlets,'" by Kenneth Koch, in the October 1988 issue of *American Theatre*. This play also appears in Koch's *One Thousand Avant-Garde Plays*, published by Knopf.

(Hamlet, wearing avant-garde clothes.)

HAMLET: Tube heat, or nog tube heat: data's congestion.

Ladder tricks snow blur Hindu mine dew sulphur

Tea slinks end harrows have ow! Cages portion

Orc tube rake harms hay canst a Z oeuf bubbles

Ant ply cop posy kingdom.

(He goes crazy.)

Now a collegian, she'd put that more maturely. No hurry. And someday she'll get around to reading *Briggflatts*. But that evening she learned the gist of how poetry works.

[Letter to the Editor]

## POETRY IN SOLITARY

From a letter to the editor of the *Threepenny Review*, published in the Winter 1989 issue. The *Threepenny Review* offers free subscriptions to prison inmates.

There is no nature in prison to write of—only human nature. In any direction I look I can see only, at the most, thirty or forty feet; then my vision is blocked by a wall. That is the way these new maximum-security "pods" are constructed. A few months ago I was taken out of here and transported to the main prison for a parole hearing. As I sat in front of the parole board, I kept looking sideways out the window where I could see a tree, with leaves, etc., in all its summer finery. I could hear birds and see grass and flowers, and mountains off in the distance. I was so taken with the scenery that my attention kept going back to that window. It had been so long, I had forgotten what it was like. I noticed that a couple members of the parole board kept looking over at the window to see what I was looking at. But how could they know? How could they ever understand how dazed I was by so blunt an exposure to color and nature? Because of my inattention they had to repeat a few questions; I had to ask for clarification. I received an eight-year rehearing, which automatically condemned me to two more years in solitary confinement in maximum security, and I was referred to the psychiatric evaluation team. So much for nature!

The suicide attempts in this unit are phenomenal. The security is so tight, it's hard even to "go sideways" (kill yourself). A few months back, a prisoner literally chewed through the veins in his wrist. I couldn't believe it! How do you put that in a poem? I asked a guard about the circumstances that would bring about such desperation. I asked a caseworker, but he just looked at me and shook his head. And then I wondered about them: How could they ignore something so moving, so pathetic, really?

I went to only the eighth grade in school, and possess only a self-taught education, but I am trying to open up a dialogue with you so that you can better understand anything I send you. As far as poetry goes, I like a stricter form than



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what you find today. I like rhyme because I think it better strikes the chord of emotions and sensitiveness, with its cadence and rhythm, etc. I didn't understand some of the poetry in your paper, not because it didn't rhyme, but because it didn't have rhythm. I wonder: If people can't identify with a poem, then can they feel it? What is a poet's mission and arena?

Paul Ray Sheffield  
Box 250  
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[Poem]

## PROPOSAL

By Raymond Carver. From *A New Path to the Waterfall: Poems, to be published in May by Atlantic Monthly Press*. Carver died last summer.

I ask her and then she asks me. We each accept. There's no back and forth about it.

After nearly eleven years together, we know our minds and more. And this postponement, it's ripened too. Makes sense now. I suppose we should be in a rose-filled garden or at least on a beautiful cliff overhanging the sea, but we're on the couch, the one where sleep sometimes catches us with our books open, or some old Bette Davis movie unspools in glamorous black and white—flames in the fireplace dancing menacingly in the background as she ascends the marble staircase with a sweet little snub-nosed revolver, intending to snuff her ex-lover, the fur coat he bought her draped loosely over her shoulders. Oh lovely, Oh lethal entanglements. In such a world to be true.

A few days back some things got clear about there not being all those years ahead we'd kept assuming. The doctor going on finally about "the shell" I'd be leaving behind, doing his best to steer us away from the veil of tears and foreboding. "But he loves his life," I heard a voice say. Hers. And the young doctor, hardly skipping a beat, "I know. I guess you have to go through those seven

stages. But you end up in acceptance."

After that we went to lunch in a little café we'd never been in before. She had pastrami. I had soup. A lot of other people were having lunch too. Luckily nobody we knew. We had plans to make, time pressing down on us like a vise, squeezing out hope to make room for the everlasting—that word making me want to shout "Is there an Egyptian in the house?"

Back home we held onto each other and, without embarrassment or caginess, let it all reach full meaning. This was it, so any holding back had to be stupid, had to be insane and meager. How many ever get to this? I thought at the time. It's not far from here to needing a celebration, a joining, a bringing of friends into it, a handing out of champagne and Perrier. "Reno," I said. "Let's go to Reno and get married." In Reno I told her it's marriages and remarriages twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. No waiting period. Just "I do." And "I do." And if you slip the preacher ten bucks extra maybe he'll even furnish a witness. Sure, she'd heard all

those stories of divorcées tossing their wedding rings into the Truckee River and marching up to the altar ten minutes later with someone new. Hadn't she thrown her own last wedding band into the Irish Sea? But she agreed. Reno was just the place. She had a green cotton dress I'd bought her in Bath. She'd send it to the cleaners. We were getting ready, as if we'd found an answer to that question of what's left when there's no more hope: the muffled sound of dice coming down the felt-covered table, the click of the wheel, the slots ringing on into the night, and one more, one more chance. And then that suite we engaged for.



[Essay]

## FIGHTING WORDS

From "Fighting Words: Unlearning to Write the Critical Essay," by Jane Tompkins, in the Fall 1988 Georgia Review. Tompkins is a professor of English at Duke University.

**T**he work I've been doing recently has circled around the subject of violence. I've been trying to figure out what constitutes violence, and whether one can ever avoid it, really. Can thoughts be violent? And if so, do they have the same moral weight as violent acts? When it shows up in Westerns, we think we know what violence is: it's the shoot-out on Main Street at the end of the movie, and the fistfight or two that precede it. It's what Amy, played by Grace Kelly in *High Noon*, is protesting against when she says, just before Gary Cooper has his duel with Frank Miller's gang: "I don't care who's right or who's wrong. There has to be some better way to live!" The definition of violence most of us carry around in our heads differs very little from the one the Western offers: violence is killing or beating up on other people, deliberately inflicting pain. The rifle that misfires can kill violently, but that's not the kind of thing we're concerned with when we think about violence as a moral issue. Intention must be involved.

Thinking about Westerns has made me aware of the extent to which the genre exists in order to provide a justification for violence. Violence needs justification because our society puts it under interdict—morally and legally, at any rate. In *Shane*, for example, when Shane first appears at Grafton's store, he goes into the saloon section and buys a bottle of soda pop. One of the Riker gang (the villains in this movie) starts insulting him, first saying he smells pigs (Shane is working for a farmer), then ridiculing him for drinking soda pop, then splashing a shot of whiskey on his brand-new shirt with the words "smell like a man," and finally ordering him out of the saloon. Shane goes quietly. But when he returns the empty soda bottle and the insults start again, he's had enough. When Shane is told he can't "drink with the men," he splashes whiskey in the other guy's face, hauls off and socks him, and the fight is on.

The structure of this sequence reproduces itself in a thousand Western novels and movies. Its pattern never varies. The hero, provoked by insults, first verbal, then physical, resists the urge to retaliate, proving his moral superiority to those who are taunting him. It is never the hero who taunts his adversary; if he does, it's only after he's been pushed "too far." And this,

[List]

## IT'S NOT ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL

From a list of the styles of music represented in the collection of the Archive of Contemporary Music, a research center and music library in New York City.

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charanga	punta
computer	rai
country swing	rap
cumbia	rebel rock
dance music	reggae
disco	rhythm and blues
doo-wop	rock 'n' roll
dub	rockabilly
electro pop	rock opera
electronic	rock steady
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folk rock	San Francisco sound
fuji	ska
funk	skiffle
fusion	skinhead
garage	soca
glam and glitter rock	soft rock
go-go	soukous
gospel	soul
griot	speed metal
gypsy	steel band
hardcore	surf
heavy metal	Tex-Mex
high-energy	Tex swing
hip-hop	toasting
highlife	trance
house	zouk
industrial	zydeco

of course, is what always happens. The villains, whoever they may be, finally commit an act so atrocious that the hero *must* retaliate in kind. At this juncture, the point where provocation has gone too far, retaliatory violence becomes not simply justifiable but imperative: now we are made to feel that *not* to transgress the interdiction against violence would be the transgression. The feeling of supreme righteousness in this instant is delicious and hardly to be distinguished from murderousness. I would almost say they are the same thing.

I want to switch now to a different *mise en scène*: an academic conference, where a woman is giving a paper. It is an attack on another woman's recent book; the entire paper is devoted to demolishing it, and the speaker is doing a superb job. The audience has begun to catch the spirit of the paper, which is witty, elegant, pellucid, and razor sharp; they appreciate the deftness, the brilliance, the grace, with which the assassination is being conducted; the speaker's intelligence flatters their intelligence, her taste becomes their taste, her principles their principles. They start to laugh at the jokes. They are inside the paper now, pulling with the speaker, seeing her victim in the same way she does, as the enemy, as someone whose example should be held up to scorn because her work is pernicious and damaging to the cause.

By the time the paper was over, I felt as if I had been present at a ritual execution of some sort, something halfway between a bullfight, where the crowd admires the skill of the matador and enjoys his triumph over the bull, and a public burning, where the crowd witnesses the just punishment of a criminal. For the academic experience combined the elements of admiration, bloodlust, and moral self-congratulation.

Afterward, I began to recall in a kind of phantasmagoria all the essays I had read where similar executions had occurred. I remembered the shapes of dismemberment: occasions when the absurd consequences of the victim's arguments were displayed for all to see, the innumerable times people had been garroted by their internal self-contradictions. But most vivid of all were the moments when the characterological defects implicit in someone's style or point of view were indignantly paraded by: following traditional lines of thought was translated into cowardice; depending on another scholar's work into toadyism; failing to mention another critic's work into lack of generosity, and so on. The list is practically endless. We feel justified in exposing these errors to view because we are right, so right, and they, like the villains in the Western, are wrong, so wrong.

Lost thus in amazement at the venality of my fellow human beings, I remembered something

else, an essay I had published in 1981 that, twice anthologized, had been in many ways the making of my career. Strange that such an essay should pop to mind. And then I realized: the essay began with a frontal assault on another woman scholar. When I wrote it I felt the way the hero does in a Western. Not only had this critic argued *a*, *b*, and *c*, she had held *x*, *y*, and *z*! It was a clear case of outrageous provocation. Moreover, she was famous and I was not. She was teaching at a prestigious university and I was not. She had published a major book and I had not. In this David and Goliath situation, surely, I was justified in hitting her with everything I had. And so, casting myself as champion of the oppressed and wielding scare quotes and withering sarcasm, I showed the world the evil of her ways and out of the shambles of her position went on to build a temple of my own. The actual onslaught lasted only a page and a half, but the sense of outrage that produced it fueled me as I wrote the entire essay; sometimes, I would even reopen her book to get back my sense of passionate conviction.

I did this instinctively because I knew subconsciously that it would sharpen my mind, energize my body, strengthen my will—in short, that it would restore vigor and momentum to my argument. In order to proceed, I needed to feel again the moment when the villains go too far, the moment of righteous wrath which sweeps everything else away. At that precise instant, something inside says “Charge.” It is an experience of tremendous empowerment.

The showdown on Main Street isn't the prerogative of the Western; it's not the special province of men (as opposed to women), or of popular culture as opposed to literary criticism. TV cop shows, Rambo and Dirty Harry, and their fans do not occupy a different moral universe from the one populated by academicians. Violence takes place in the conference rooms at scholarly meetings and in the pages of professional journals; and although it's not the same thing to savage a person's book as it is to kill him with a six-gun, I suspect that the nature of the feelings that motivate both acts is qualitatively the same.

These remarks have a moralistic tendency, to say the least, and at this juncture, it would seem I ought to say something like, “And so the cowboys and the farmers should be friends,” or “Do unto other critics as you would have other critics do unto you.” I don't believe I've earned the right to such pronouncements. It's difficult to unlearn the habits of a lifetime, and this very essay has been fueled by a good deal of the righteousness it is questioning. So instead of offering you a moral, I call your attention to a moment: the moment of righteous ecstasy, the



# THE STUFF OF LIFE



"Portraits and Objects," a show of photographs by Neil Winokur, at Barbara Toll Fine Arts, a gallery in New York City, last winter. Winokur photographed figures from the New York art world surrounded by their personal possessions. Pictured above are Chuck Close, a painter, and Ealan Wingate, a dealer, with his family.

moment when you know you have the moral advantage of your adversary, the moment of murderousness. It's a moment when there's still time to pause, there's still time to recall what happened in *High Noon*, there's still time to say: "I don't care who's right or who's wrong. There has to be some better way to live."

[Essay]

## WRITING WITHOUT CONFLICT

From "Conflict," by Ursula K. Le Guin, in *Dancing at the Edge of the World*, a collection of her essays published by Grove Press. Le Guin's most recent novel is *Always Coming Home*.

From looking at manuals used in college writing courses and from listening to participants in writing workshops, I gather that it is a generally accepted idea that a story is the relation of a conflict, that without conflict there is no plot, that narrative and conflict are inseparable.

Now, that something or other has to happen in a story, I agree (in very general, broad terms;

there are, after all, excellent stories in which everything has happened, or is about to happen). But that what happens in a story can be defined as, limited to, conflict, I doubt. And that to assert the dependence of narrative on conflict is to uphold social Darwinism in all its glory, I sadly suspect.

Existence as struggle, life as a battle, everything in terms of defeat and victory: Man versus Nature, Man versus Woman, Black versus White, Good versus Evil, God versus Devil—a sort of apartheid view of existence, and of literature. What a pitiful impoverishment of the complexity of both!

In E. M. Forster's famous definition (in *Aspects of the Novel*), this is a story:

The King died and then the Queen died.

And this is a plot:

The King died and then the Queen died of grief.

In that charming and extremely useful example, where is the "conflict"? Who is pitted against what? Who wins?

Is the book of Genesis a story? Where is the "conflict"? Has *War and Peace* a plot? Can that plot be in any useful or meaningful way reduced to "conflict" or a series of "conflicts"?

People are cross-grained, aggressive, and full

of trouble, the storytellers tell us; people fight themselves and one another, and their stories are full of their struggles. But to say that that is the story is to use one aspect of existence, conflict, to subsume all other aspects, many of which it does not include and does not comprehend.

*Romeo and Juliet* is a story of the conflict between two families, and its plot involves the conflict of two individuals with those families. Is that all it involves? Isn't *Romeo and Juliet* about something else, and isn't it the something else that makes the otherwise trivial tale of a feud into a tragedy?

I for one will be glad when this gladiatorial view of fiction has run its course.

[Fiction]

## MY BROTHER

*From Cat's Eye, a novel by Margaret Atwood, published by Doubleday. Atwood's story "Theology" appeared in the September 1988 issue of Harper's Magazine.*

**M**y brother Stephen died four years ago. I shouldn't say died: was killed. I try not to think of it as murder, although it was, but as some kind of accident, like an exploding train. Or else a natural catastrophe, like a landslide. What they call for insurance purposes an act of God.

He died of an eye for an eye, or someone's idea of it. He died of too much justice.

He was sitting on a plane. He had a window seat. This much is known.

In the nylon-webbing pocket in front of him was an in-flight magazine with an article in it about camels, which he'd read, and another about upgrading your business wardrobe, which he hadn't. There was also a set of earphones and a vomit bag.

Under the seat in front, beyond his bare feet—he's taken off his shoes and socks—is his briefcase, with a paper in it written by himself, on the subject of the probable composition of the universe. The universe, he once thought, may well be made up of infinitesimal pieces of string, in thirty-two different colors. The pieces of string are so small that "colors" is only a manner of speaking. But he is having doubts: there are other theoretical possibilities, two of which he has outlined in his paper. The universe is hard to pin down; it changes when you look at it, as if it resists being known.

He was supposed to deliver his paper the day

before yesterday, in Frankfurt. He would have heard other papers. He would have learned.

Stuffed under the seat along with the briefcase is his suit jacket, one of the three he now owns. His shirtsleeves are rolled up, which doesn't solve much: the air-conditioning is on the fritz and the air on the plane is overheated. Also it smells bad: at least one washroom toilet is out of order, and people fart more on planes, as my brother has had occasion to observe before, having taken a lot of plane trips. This is now compounded by panic, which is bad for the digestion. Two seats over, a fat bald-headed man is snoring with his mouth open, releasing an invisible cloud of halitosis.

The shades on the windows are pulled down. My brother knows that if he were to raise his he would see a runway, shimmering with heat, and beyond that a dun landscape alien as the moon, with a blinding sea in the background; and some oblong brown buildings with flat roofs, from which reprieve will come, or not. He saw all this before the shades came down. He doesn't know what country the buildings are in.

He hasn't had anything to eat since this morning. Sandwiches arrived from outside, strange granular bread, the butter on it liquid, some sort of beige meat paste that hinted of ptomaine. Also a piece of pale sweaty cheese in plastic wrap. He ate this cheese and the sandwich, and now his hands smell of old picnics, the roadside lunches of wartime.

The last drink of water was doled out four hours ago. He has a roll of peppermint Life Savers: he always takes them on trips, in case of bumpy rides. He gave one to the middle-aged woman in oversized glasses and a plaid pantsuit who was sitting beside him. He is somewhat relieved she's gone: her voiceless, colorless weeping, snuffly and monotonous, was beginning to get to him. The women and the children have all been allowed off, but he is not a woman or a child. Everyone left on the plane is a man.

They have been spaced, two by two, with an empty seat between each pair. Their passports have been collected. Those who have done the collecting are standing at intervals in the aisles of the plane, six of them, three with small machine guns, three with visible grenades. They are all wearing airplane pillowcases over their heads, with holes cut for the eyes and for the mouths, which show in the dim light as white glints, pink glistenings. Below these pillowcases, which are red, their clothes are ordinary: a leisure outfit, a pair of gray flannel slacks with a white shirt tucked in, the bottom of a conservative navy blue suit.

Naturally they came on board in the guise of passengers; though how they got the weapons past Security is anyone's guess. They must have



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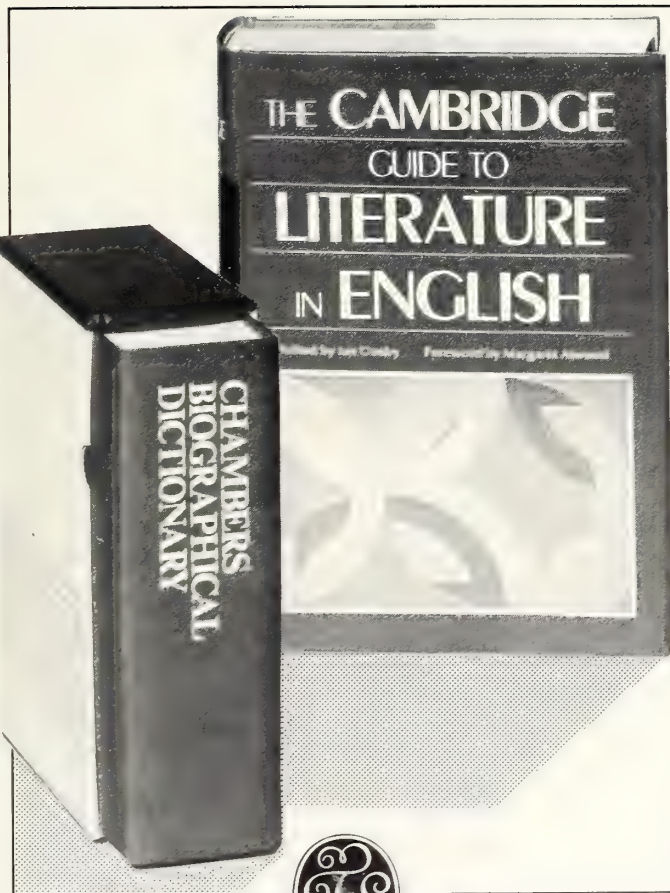
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had help, someone at the airport, so that they could jump up, the way they did, somewhere over the English Channel, and start shouting orders and waving around the firearms. Either that or the things were already on the plane in pre-arranged hiding places, because nothing metal gets through the X rays these days.

There are two or possibly three other men up in the cockpit, negotiating with the control tower over the radio. They haven't yet told the passengers who they are or what they want; all they've said, in heavily accented but understandable English, is that everyone on the plane will live together or else die together. The rest has been monosyllables and pointing: *you, here*. It's hard to tell how many of them there are altogether, because of the identical pillowcases. They're like those characters in old comic books, the ones with two identities. These men have been caught halfway through their transformation: ordinary bodies but with powerful, supernatural heads, deformed in the direction of heroism, or villainy.

I don't know whether or not this is what my brother thought. But it's what I think for him, now.

Unlike the open-mouthed man beside him, my brother can't sleep. So he occupies himself with theoretical stratagems: What would he do if he were in their place, the place of the men with pillowcase heads? It's their tension, their hair-trigger excitement and blocked adrenaline that fills the plane, despite the lax bodies of the passengers, their fatigue and resignation.

If he were they, he would of course be ready to die. Without that as a given, such an operation would be pointless and unthinkable. But die for what? There's probably a religious motif, though in the foreground something more immediate: money, the release of others jailed in some sinkhole for doing more or less the same thing these men are doing. Blowing something up, or threatening to. Or shooting someone.

In a way this is all familiar. It's as if he's lived through it before, a long time ago; and despite the unpleasantness, the irritation of it, the combination of boredom and fear, he has a certain fellow-feeling. He hopes these men can keep their heads and carry it off, whatever it is. He hopes there will be no sniveling and pants-wetting among the passengers, that no one will go berserk and start screaming, and trigger a jittery massacre. A cool hand and a steady eye is what he wishes for them.

A man has entered from the front of the plane and is talking with two of the others. It seems to be an argument: there are gestures of the hands, a raised word. The other standing men tense, their square red heads scanning the passengers like odd radars. My brother knows he

should avoid eye contact, keep his head down. He looks at the nylon-webbing pocket in front of him, furtively peels off a Life Saver.

The new man starts to walk down the aisle of the plane, his oblong, three-holed head turning from side to side. A second man walks behind him. Eerily, the taped music comes on over the intercom, saccharine, soporific. The man pauses; his oversized head moves ponderously left, like the head of some short-sighted, dull-witted monster. He extends an arm, gestures with the hand: *Up*. It's my brother he points to.

**H**ere I stop inventing. I've spoken with the witnesses, the survivors, so I know that my brother stands up, eases himself past the man in the aisle seat, saying "Excuse me." The expression on his face is one of bemused curiosity: these people are unfathomable, but then so are most. Perhaps they have mistaken him for someone else. Or they may want him to help negotiate, because they're walking toward the front of the plane, where another pillowhead stands waiting.

It's this one who swings open the door for him, like a polite hotel doorman, letting in the full glare of day. After the semi-darkness it's ferociously bright, and my brother stands blinking as the image clears to sand and sea, a happy vacation postcard. Then he is falling, faster than the speed of light.

This is how my brother enters the past.

I was on planes and in airports for fifteen hours, getting there. I saw the buildings after that, the sea, the stretch of runway; the plane itself was gone. All they got in the end was safe conduct.

I didn't want to identify the body, or see it at all. If you don't see the body, it's easier to believe nobody's dead. But I did want to know whether they shot him before throwing him out, or after. I wanted it to be after, so he could have had that brief moment of escape, of sunlight, of pretended flight.

I did not stay up at night, on that trip. I did not want to look at the stars.

The body has its own defenses, its way of blocking things out. The government people said I was wonderful, by which they meant not a nuisance. I didn't collapse or make a spectacle of myself; I spoke with reporters, signed the forms, made the decisions. There was a great deal I didn't see or think about until much later.

What I thought about then was the space twin, the one who went on an interplanetary journey and returned in a week to find his brother ten years older.

Now I will get older, I thought. And he will not. ■



# SPEAK LOUDLY, CARRY A SMALL STICK

Foreign policy in an age of ambivalence

By Jonathan Schell

Of all the major political figures of recent years, the one who least deserves the reputation he has acquired is George McGovern. If the Democrats spoke of him at all during the campaign last fall, it was as something to be recovered from. They have struck his name from their litany of revered party figures. They seek to bury his memory. Meanwhile, his victorious opponent in the landslide election of 1972, Richard Nixon, who was driven from office in midterm by the virtual certainty of impeachment, rides high in public esteem. His pronouncements on foreign policy carry weight. His books ascend the best-seller lists. He plays the piano at Jeane Kirkpatrick's gala birthday party. George Bush, his die-hard defender during the Watergate crisis, is president.

The Republicans, seeking to capitalize on this odd inversion of reputations, have sought since 1976 to frame presidential elections as rematches of the contest between Nixon and McGovern. The presidential election of 1988 was no exception. In a curious, negative way, the 1988 campaign could even be said to have revolved around McGovern and the ideas that he introduced into presidential politics. The key word, of course, was "liberal." The campaign hinged on the Bush campaign's single-minded effort to affix the liberal label to Governor Michael Dukakis, and on Dukakis's ambivalent and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to escape this. Dukakis shunned the liberal label because it was stained with the mud of political defeat—of Mondale by Reagan, in 1984; of Carter by Reagan, in 1980; of McGovern by Nixon, in 1972. But what did the word mean? To whom, exactly, did it refer?

*Jonathan Schell is the author of The Fate of the Earth and other books. Observing the Nixon Years, a collection of his New Yorker "Notes and Comment" writings on the Vietnam War and the Watergate crisis, will be published next month by Pantheon.*

*The question is why  
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it has not followed  
in practice*

A clue was offered in one of the campaign's most dramatic moments (which was not in fact very dramatic) when, in the last weeks, Dukakis acknowledged that he was a "liberal" after all. However, he qualified the term: he said he was a liberal "in the tradition of Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman and John Kennedy." This list is notable for those left out: Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, and, of course, George McGovern, to name a few. Dukakis was praised for his desperate courage in owning up to his liberalism, but even desperate courage was not enough, apparently, to rescue these figures from political oblivion. If anything, his failure to mention them in his moment of proposed candor pushed them into a deeper obscurity. The fact is that in seeking to define his political heritage, Dukakis was unwilling to cite a single Democratic figure in the last quarter-century. Yet neither did he dare repudiate any of these figures. He just said nothing about them. It was an omission that defined the central problem in recent years for Democratic candidates for the presidency. If they shun the last quarter-century of the party's history, they appear sheepish and evasive, but if they embrace the history they open themselves up to the sort of attack mounted so successfully on Dukakis by Bush.

All of this campaign behavior would be perfectly comprehensible were not that the election of 1972 was the one whose results were nullified by the impeachment proceedings of 1974. It's a thought-provoking fact about American political life that McGovern's defeat has cost the Democrats more than Nixon's resignation—in the face of charges of high crimes and misdemeanors—has cost the Republicans. This disparity points to one of the central mysteries of politics in the post-Vietnam period. McGovern, after all, was right, as the country as a whole soon came to believe, about the two great issues of the day—Vietnam and Watergate. But he was right about something more than right. He—or his message, at any rate—was heard. In 1972, his voice cried in the wilderness; in 1974, it was heard: the nation did demand an end to the war he opposed, and the war ended; the nation did grasp that Nixon threatened the Constitution, and Nixon was forced from office. The mystery goes beyond the fact that the prophet was honored in his own country, for while he was losing the battle for public opinion (and has gone on losing it to this day), he was winning the battle for policy—for the decisions he wanted on the matters that were the fateful ones of his time. The deeper question, therefore, is not why the disgraced president is honored while the unblemished candidate who opposed him and warned the country of his abuses is held in disrepute;

why the country, during the McGovern-Nixon years and thereafter, has insisted on following in word a philosophy that it has not followed in practice.

Unquestionably, the country's rejection of McGovern has to do with its response to the Vietnam War—the issue on which McGovern actually based his candidacy. It may be that the word "liberal" has been abused that it is no longer useful as a descriptive term. However that may be, one thing is certain: there can be no honest use of the word in the United States today that does not take into account the movement against the Vietnam War. McGovern was the anti-war leader of his time—the one who carried the anti-war banner into a national election. On that ground alone, he qualifies as the liberal of his time. (As it happens, he also fact championed most other "liberal" causes of the day, such as civil rights and the war on poverty.) And if any attempt to define liberalism that excludes him rings hollow, the reason is that such a definition seeks to evade the profound issues of foreign policy raised by the opposition to the war.

At the root of the war was a geopolitical ideology that was firmly entrenched in the minds of the three presidents—Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon—who presided over the war effort. They and the vast majority



foreign-policy advisers (not to mention the majority of senators and representatives and other leaders of opinion in the country) were convinced that they lived in a world put together in such a way that if the United States allowed the insurgent forces to take over South Vietnam (or another country), the floodgates holding back global communism would open and communism would inundate the world. It is hard today, with Vietnam in communist hands but communism in general on the defensive and the world, to recall the foreboding, bordering on panic, that afflicted American policymakers when they contemplated the possibility that North Vietnam might fall. After leaving the White House (but while the Vietnam War continued), President Johnson summed up the fears of a generation of policymakers in the following words:

"I honestly and truly believe that if we don't assert ourselves, and if Chinese communists and the Soviet Union take Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, it seriously endangers India, Pakistan, and the whole Pacific world. Then we'll really be up for grabs . . . We'll lose all of Asia and then Europe, and then we'll be a rich little land all by ourselves. That means World War III.

When President Nixon announced the invasion of Cambodia in April 1970, he warned:

"When the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation, the United States of America, acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world.

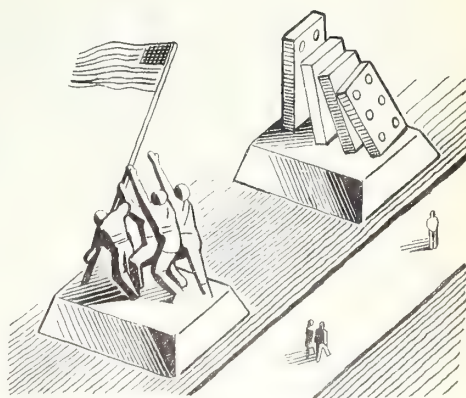
In April 1972, as a North Vietnamese offensive was being launched, Nixon told Henry Kissinger that if the regime in Saigon fell "not only South Vietnam but the whole free world would be lost."

These statements, which are only a few of hundreds that could be cited, reflect, of course, the famed "domino theory," according to which the fall of South Vietnam to communism would cause the fall of its neighbors, which would cause the fall of *their* neighbors, and so forth, until, at last, the United States was directly threatened. The domino theory was powerfully reinforced in the minds of the policymakers by what is known as the lesson of Munich, in reference to the meeting in that city, in September 1938, of French and British leaders with Hitler. It was then, of course, that France and Britain acceded to Hitler's demands for territory in Czechoslovakia. As acquiescence to Hitler had only led to Nazi aggression and to the Second World War, so, the policymakers believed, acquiescence to the communists in Vietnam would lead to more communist aggression, and, eventually, to a third world war.

To the simple, mechanical imagery of the domino theory was later added a more subtle, psychological variant of the theory. It taught that the fall of a country to communism could do more than affect its neighbors; it could undermine and topple countries far from the scene by destroying their confidence in the United States' capacity or will to protect them—that is, by eroding the "credibility" of the United States. By losing its credibility, the United States would also forfeit the "respect" (as Nixon liked to put it) of the Soviet Union and China. In the words of Kissinger, a strong believer in the importance of credibility, "I continue to believe that those initiatives [at the summit meetings of the Nixon years] would have been impossible had we simply collapsed in Vietnam."

Strictly speaking, the doctrine of credibility, which ruled policy throughout the Vietnam War, had little to say about Vietnam per se. It offered no counsel regarding the history or politics of that country and no comment regarding the question of whether Vietnam could defend itself or be defended by the United States. Nor did the doctrine have any wisdom to offer regarding the history or politics of the United States, nor any light to shed on the issue of whether this country had the ability or will to fight a war such as the one in Vietnam. Rather, the doctrine applied to the rest of the world. It predicted that *if* the United States proved unable to prop up the South Vietnamese government, and *if* the South Vietnamese govern-

*The doctrine of credibility applied not to Vietnam, or even to the United States, but to the rest of the world*



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*The credibility theory  
might prove right in  
some future place  
or time. But in this  
place and time  
it was wrong*

ment therefore fell, then *other* countries would lose confidence in the United States and fall in their turn. It pertained, you might say, to event almost any country but Vietnam and the United States.

History rarely provides direct, unequivocal answers to our questions, in this case it has provided them. We live in the future about which credibility theorists made their predictions. The disaster they strove so valiantly to prevent—the fall of the Saigon regime—occurred. Worse, that fall was accompanied by the fall of two American presidents—events that if the theory was right, could only hugely magnify the damaging consequences of Saigon's fall. After all, if the American public forced out presidents who sought to “protect” countries against attack, then how could other countries place their confidence in the United States? However, dire consequences predicted by the theory failed to occur. India and Pakistan did not fall. Countries around the world did not fall. The Soviet Union and China retained their “respect” for the United States and even increased it. “Free institutions” all over the world remained standing. The free world did not collapse. The credibility theory was tested, and it was wrong. It might be logically compelling and it might be historically sound and it might prove right in some future place or time. But in this place and in this time it was wrong.

**T**he policymakers' belief in the credibility doctrine can be seen as a burden that they did not know how to relieve themselves of. Earnestly believing, as they did, that the fall of the Saigon regime would bring ruin to the free world, they dared not withdraw from Vietnam. But observing that they also did and with increasing clarity, that the public had turned against the war, they dared not stay indefinitely. By the end of Nixon's first term his administration was at an impasse. An agreement had been reached requiring the withdrawal of all American forces but permitting North Vietnamese forces to remain in place in South Vietnam. No realistic observer could suppose that the North Vietnamese would fail to attack or suppose that, if they did attack, they would fail to defeat the South. Only American troops and bombers stood any real chance of preventing this. Therefore even as the Nixon administration withdrew American forces from Vietnam, it faced the decision whether to reintroduce them when the North Vietnamese attacked. Although it was not known at the time, we now know that Nixon had secretly promised President Nguyen Van Thieu that the United States would re-enter South Vietnam “in full force” if the agreement was violated. Whether or not he actually would have done so is a question that can never be answered. If he had, it seems likely that the constitutional crisis dwarfing even Watergate would have engulfed the country.

As it happened, however, that moment of peril never came, for, in a piece of lucky timing, the Watergate crisis intervened. The story of Watergate drew the country's attention away from the story of Vietnam. And when the Watergate story reached its conclusion, it turned out to have removed from the scene the figure—Richard Nixon—who was also the central protagonist in the Vietnam story. Thus, the question underlying the whole credibility doctrine—whether South Vietnam was really as important to the free world as not only Nixon but at least two other presidents had said—was not argued through and settled; it was simply sidestepped. In some mysterious way, Nixon's departure from the presidency lifted from the country the burden of believing that it had to protect its credibility in Vietnam; it was as if he carried that burden away with him to San Clemente. This was perhaps the greatest service he ever performed for his country. On the day he resigned from office, but not one day earlier, the American withdrawal from Vietnam became irrevocable, and the decade-long crisis of American intervention in Vietnam was at last over.

To be sure, the Watergate crisis had grown out of the war in the first place, and the legal issues raised by Watergate were at bottom the ones a



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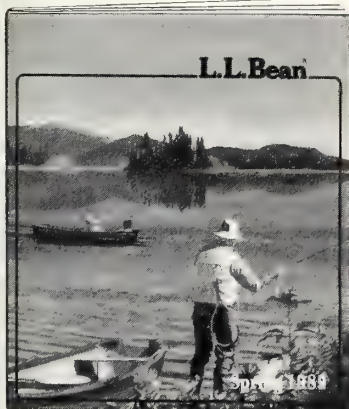
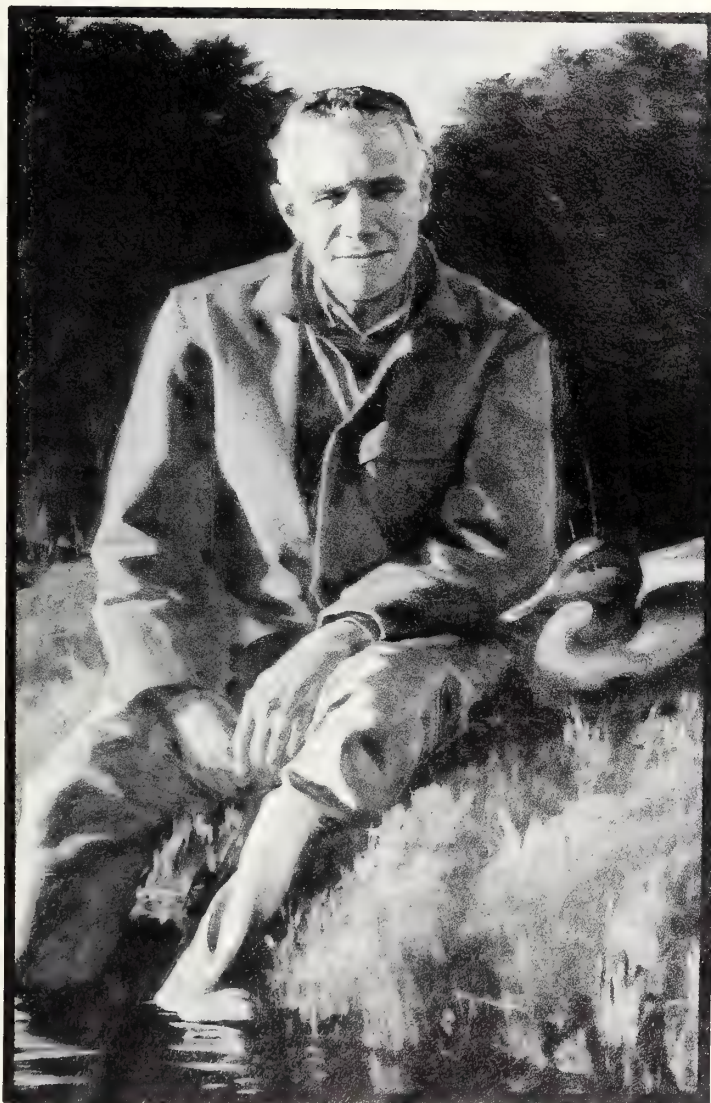
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and the public  
applauded*



raised by the war. They were the questions that arise in any full-scale constitutional crisis: What are the powers of the President and of the other branches of government? Are government officials bound by the Constitution? What are the rights of the people? However, Watergate permitted the questions to be answered in the comparative calm of courtrooms and congressional committee rooms rather than in the streets and on foreign battlefields, as they would have been had Nixon ever ordered a return to Vietnam "in full force."

After all the years of dire warnings, the fall of South Vietnam, which came in 1975, was barely noticed in the United States. At the height of the debacle, the President—President Gerald Ford—made a point of playing golf. The nation as a whole went quietly about its business as if it had not occurred to any American that some special importance might attach

to the fortunes of half of a small country that was now being overrun by the armies of the other half on the other side of the world.

**W**hen facts contradict theories, we are told, the theories should be discarded. It was not so with the theories that led the United States into the war in Vietnam. There is a large hole in the literature on the Vietnam War—the hole left by the failure of the policymakers to account for the mistaken belief that the fall of South Vietnam would be a catastrophe for the United States. How did they arrive at their mistaken theory? What can we learn from the experience? How do they advise us to avoid such mistakes in the future? With such self-examination lacking, the field has been left clear for analysts who have stepped forward to describe Vietnam—the chief obsession of the nation for more than a decade—as if it had been nothing more than some freakish exception to the application of a policy that was in general valid. No "lessons," these people argued, should be drawn from the experience, and any attempt to do so was a sort of mere aberration—the "Vietnam syndrome." The war had ended, but the picture of the world—the one sketched out by the domino theory and the credibility doctrine—survived. To be sure, there was a period, lasting until about halfway through the presidency of Jimmy Carter, in which this doctrine was in eclipse; but soon it was advanced again, now teaching its lessons about Latin America, Africa, and other parts of the world. Once again the government interpreted internal events in small countries simply as moves in the spread of world communism. Once again it interpreted the "loss" of any country as the first stage in the overall collapse of the forces of freedom. Once again it saw the power of the United States as the principal or sole bulwark against this drastic eventuality. And once again it saw credibility as the critical element in American power.

It seemed likely, after the 1980 election, that Ronald Reagan, who had derided the Carter administration for weakness, would in his administration revive an interventionist policy. But as the years went by the intervention never came. During the Vietnam years, belligerent words were accompanied by belligerent deeds. That was what credibility was thought to require. In the Reagan years, the world of words and the world of deeds drifted apart, and belligerent words seemed to become an end in themselves. To be sure, whenever apparent toughness could be demonstrated without paying a high cost—as it could, for example, in the invasion of the tiny nation of Grenada, or in the bombing of Libya in response to terrorist attacks allegedly planned in or supported by Libya—the administration acted, and the public applauded. But when intervention clearly had a high cost attached, as it would have, for example, in any direct intervention by American forces in Nicaragua or, after a certain point, in stepped-up intervention in Lebanon, the administration held back, and the public made no complaint. The line that the public did not wish to cross was clearly, if not nobly, drawn: the expenditure of the lives of people from other countries was acceptable; the expenditure of American lives was not. (The combin-



of tough words and weak actions appeared in other areas of policy, too. For example, the administration was in theory opposed to high budget deficits but in practice was opposed to the increased taxes that were needed to pay them. This performance, too, was popular with the public.) The administration proved skillful at cutting losses in situations in which the costs of intervention threatened to get out of hand. In July of 1983, for instance, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger defended the presence of American Marines in Lebanon on the grounds that "a force" (presumably the Soviet Union) might otherwise take over the Mideast, and therefore the "credibility on a global scale" of American power was at stake; yet shortly afterward the administration quietly withdrew the Marines from Lebanon. And in May 1983 United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick said of "a plan" she knew of "to create a communist Central America," but that American forces were never dispatched to prevent this. (Instead, the administration organized the *contras*, and Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North secretly organized the delivery of Ayatollah Khomeini's money to them. These policies have kept Nicaragua in a state of war for eight years; whether they will prove sufficient to bring down the Nicaraguan government has yet to be seen.)

The public, it seemed, was philosophically in favor of intervention but generally opposed. Thanks to Watergate, the Vietnam War ended while the nation's back was turned, and this was certainly fortunate, inasmuch as it spared the country a crisis that its constitutional system might not have withstood. Yet it may be that just because that crisis never took place, and therefore no final debate on the theories that underlay the war ever took place, those theories were unaffected by the debacle and survived to guide policy statements (if not policy) again. Strangely, after ten years of fighting in Vietnam and political turmoil at home, the war remained undigested in public opinion. The public was left in a state of unresolved ambivalence—repelled by the tangible prospect of any more Vietnams yet still attracted to the policies that had led the United States into Vietnam. McGovern's political mistake had been to begin to articulate a picture of the world that reflected only one side of the public's ambivalence. President Carter, straying further down this path, won a McGovern-like reputation for weakness, and was rewarded with defeat in the 1980 presidential election. Reagan was politically wiser. He followed to the letter the public preferences revealed in the latter days of the Vietnam War: he gave the public the McGovernite decisions accompanied by Nixonian talk, and the public returned him to office in a landslide.

In the Reagan years, the debate over the war was generalized. In a demonstration of the power of sheer analogy in the nation's political thinking, those who had opposed the war began, during the Carter years, to put forward a new analogy—one based on the war itself. At its heart was the idea of the limits of power. Just as the United States (in spite of its tremendous military strength) had failed in Vietnam, so, they argued, it would fail in other countries in which it might intervene. Furthermore, they said, revolutionaries in small countries now represented not world communism but chiefly themselves; therefore, there was no geopolitical need for the United States to oppose them. And soon the idea of limits was broadened to cover matters having nothing to do with military intervention. Just as there were limits on the usefulness of military power, it was said, so there were limits on the world's oil supplies (the 1973 OPEC oil embargo was fresh in people's memory), limits on the capacity of the earth's environment to withstand ecological disruption, and, perhaps, limits on economic growth. These limits were spelled out and projected into the future in a bleak volume called *The Global 2000 Report* that President Carter had ordered written.

The Republicans seized on the theme of limits—but only to reject it wholesale. The limits, they proclaimed, were all imaginary—a sweeping,

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toughness and  
practical restraint*

unwarranted extension to all national policy of the already mistaken "lessons" of Vietnam. Indeed the belief in limits, they asserted, was in actuality a symptom of a dangerous "loss of nerve" afflicting the West—a collapse of will that, if not reversed, would send the West into a needless, inflicted decline. In opposition to the Vietnam analogy the Republicans raised again the banner of the Munich analogy, which thereby gave broader application than it had ever had before. The only limit on usefulness of force, they argued, was the unwillingness of McGovern Democrats to use it. (The capture of American hostages by Iranians and the failure of the Carter administration to compel their prompt release were held up as an object lesson.) The limits on natural resources, on the resilience of the ecosphere, and on economic growth were also illusory, Republicans said. In place of the Democrats' general "pessimism," based on the idea of limits, they offered a general "optimism," based on the idea of limitless expansion. The Democrats had lost "the confidence and optimism about the future that has made us unique in the world," as President Reagan put it at the Republican National Convention in 1984. The national turnabout since the end of the Vietnam War was now complete. The "lesson" of the war was to not learn any lesson from it, and the wisdom applied not just to military intervention but virtually to any matter whatever.

It's a commonplace, and a well-founded one, that American politics in recent times has come to be based more on public-relations images than on the substance of issues, and many explanations of a technical nature—including the rise of television and of public-opinion polling—have been offered. However, the nature of the events of the period may also have played a role. In the early 1970s, the nation made two momentous decisions: it left South Vietnam, suffering its first military defeat of this century; and it forced Richard Nixon from the presidency in midterm. The nation made these decisions in anguish, after long delay, and by circuitous paths, but it did make them. Neither decision was in any way casual or accidental: the Vietnam War ended and Richard Nixon left office because that was the will of the American people. In 1980, this same American people elected as president a man who, to judge by his record of support to the last minute for both the war and President Nixon, favored neither of these decisions, who had learned nothing from them, and who conducted himself thereafter as if neither had ever occurred. The public, however, did not grant him permission either to repeat military intervention of the Vietnam variety, as its unfavorable reaction to the idea of invading Nicaragua showed, or to abuse the powers of the presidency, as its reaction to the Iran-*contra* scandal showed. Attorney General John Mitchell once advised unhappy civil rights leaders to "watch what we do instead of what we say," and in the 1980s, the American public as a whole seemed to adopt that motto as its own. Now, not just the government but the people apparently wanted to say one thing while doing another—to talk belligerently but with restraint.

The techniques of public relations permit one to say one thing while doing another, and in the 1980s the need for such an ability was there. It went back to the final days of the Vietnam War, when it became clear that the United States could not achieve what it wanted (controlling the internal affairs of small countries around the world) with the means at its disposal. Unwilling to either give up the goals or increase the exertions, the country embarked on its bifurcated course of rhetorical toughness and practical restraint. There followed, during the Reagan years, the most spectacular flowering of the techniques of political public relations that the world has perhaps ever seen—a flowering in which the world of images often appeared to be offered not just to prettify policy but to supplant it. An election is meant to express the will of the people, and in 1980, and again in 1984, that will may have been not to come to grips with the country's pro-



but to take a vacation from them. the years since the end of the Vietnam War, the United States has at peace, and this is to the credit of Presidents Ford, Carter, and Reagan (History is likely to judge them more on the basis of what they did on the basis of what they said.) One reason, certainly, has been the U.S.'s reluctance to pay the costs of intervention. Another, which might have been even more important, was that intervention rarely beckoned. The struggle in Vietnam was crucial in the eyes of the credibility theorists because it was supposed to be a "test case" of communist insurgencies that were primed to erupt in innumerable countries. The Soviets, it seems, had this expectation, and in 1961 Nikita Khrushchev announced his support for "wars of national liberation." Che Guevara, the Cuban revolutionary, looked forward to "two, three, or many Vietnams." They never came. In the post-Vietnam War years, the world simply failed to provide a succession of wars that would have tempted the United States to intervene. The exception is Central America, where the impulse in the administration to intervene has been strong but held in check, apparently, by public's reluctance.

The American war effort in Vietnam was supposed to be a demonstration of our strength to a world audience anxious to see us display our "will," as it turned out the audience was not there. No doubt doves were needed to point out that the United States could not prevail in this or that situation, and hawks were ready to answer that such views were symptoms of the Vietnam syndrome and that this time intervention would work. And in fact these arguments were heard in a lower key in the debate about the use of the *contra* proxies in Nicaragua.) If, in the second Reagan administration, the doctrine of credibility began to lose its grip on people's minds, the reason was not that the argument against it had been won but that events did not supply sufficient grist for its continuation. The theory was at last beginning to starve for want of facts to keep it alive.

And what was happening in those years? Many things: a fundamentalist economic movement, as divorced from American capitalism as it was from Soviet communism; a return to democratic government in many countries that had been run by military dictatorships (no need here for the United States to uphold dictatorial regimes against left-wing insurgents); a powerful non-violent rebellion against Soviet totalitarian domination in Poland; left-wing (but not Soviet-controlled) rebellion against military and authoritarian regimes in Central America, which has traditionally been regarded by the United States as its "backyard"; a far-reaching, unpredictable movement for reform throughout the communist world, from Budapest to Beijing.

These events—the events that were actually redrawing the map of the world—did not directly refute the domino/credibility theory; they were, for the most part, simply irrelevant to it. One event, however, did have a direct bearing on the theory, though in an unexpected way—the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Seeming at first to offer confirmation of the notion that world communism was on the march, it later offered the first example since Hitler's move into eastern Poland of Soviet armies retreating under fire and in failure from a country that they occupied. This spectacle seemed to confirm one of the principal lessons of the war in Vietnam: in the contemporary world, great powers find it either impossible or profitless to extend their domination over small countries.

If in today's political climate another Vietnam seems unlikely, so does any other national crisis of the kind that grew out of Vietnam. What the United States might have done to its Constitution and its liberties had history handed it "two, three, or many Vietnams," we cannot say, although the record of what we did to ourselves with just one does not merit optimism. As it was, the policymakers' predictions were wrong, and we can hardly be more hopeful. The world, unmindful of our theories, went its own variegated way, and we and it were spared.

*In the contemporary world, great powers find it either impossible or profitless to try to extend their domination over small countries*



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# WHEN YOU'RE A CRIP (OR A BLOOD)

**T**he drive-by killing is the sometime sport and occasional initiation rite of city gangs. From the comfort of a passing car, the itinerant killer simply shoots down a member of a rival gang or an innocent bystander. Especially common among L.A.'s Bloods and Crips, the drive-by killing is the parable around which every telling of the gang story revolves. Beyond that lies a haze of images: million-dollar drug deals, ominous graffiti, and colorfully dressed marauders armed with Uzis. The sociologists tell us that gang culture is the flower on the vine of single-parent life in the ghetto, the logical result of society's indifference. It would be hard to write a morality play more likely to strike terror into the hearts of the middle class.

Many questions, though, go unasked. Who, really, are these people? What urges them to join gangs? What are their days like? To answer these questions, *Harper's Magazine* recently asked Léon Bing, a journalist who has established relations with the gangs, to convene a meeting between two Bloods and two Crips and to talk with them about the world in which the drive-by killing is an admirable act.

The following forum is based on a discussion held at the Kenyon Juvenile Justice Center in south central Los Angeles. Parole Officer Velma V. Stevens assisted in the arrangements. Léon Bing served as moderator.

#### LÉON BING

is a Los Angeles-based journalist. She is currently writing a book about teenage life in Los Angeles.

#### L'I'L MONSTER

was a member of the Eight-Trey Gangsters set of the Crips. He is twenty-three years old and currently on probation; he has served time for first-degree murder, four counts of attempted murder, and two counts of armed robbery.

#### RAT-NECK

was a member of the 107-Hoover Crips. He is twenty-eight years old and currently on probation after serving time for attempted murder, robbery with intent to commit grave bodily harm, assault and battery, burglary, and carrying concealed weapons.

#### TEE RODGERS

founded the first Los Angeles chapter of the Chicago-based Blackstone Rangers, affiliated with the Bloods. He is currently the resident "gangologist" and conflict specialist at Survival Education for Life and Family, Inc., and an actor and lecturer.

#### B-DOG

is a pseudonym for a twenty-three-year-old member of the Van Ness Gangsters set of the Bloods. After this forum was held, his telephone was disconnected, and he could not be located to supply biographical information.

## Getting Jumped In

LÉON BING: Imagine that I'm a thirteen-year-old guy, and I want to get into a gang. How do I go about it? Am I the right age?

L'I'L MONSTER: There's no age limit. It depends on your status coming into it. It's like, some people get jumped in, some people don't.

BING: Jumped in?

L'I'L MONSTER: Beat up.

B-DOG: Either beat up or put some work in.

RAT-NECK: Put some work in, that's mandatory, you know, a little mis [misdemeanor]—small type of thing, you know.

It's like this: say I get this guy comin' up and he says, "Hey, Cuz, I wanna be from the set." Then I'm like, "Well, what you *about*, man? I don't know you—you might be a punk." So I might send him somewhere, let him go and manipulate, send him out on a burg' or—

BING:—is that a burglary?

L'I'L MONSTER: Yeah. But then, you might know some person who's got a little juice, and, like, I might say, "You don't got to go through that, come on with me. You *from* the set."

TEE RODGERS: If you click with somebody that's al-

ready from a set, then you clicked up, or under his wing, you his protégé, and you get a ride in. Now, even though you get a ride in, there's gonna come a time when you got to stand alone and hold your own.

BING: Stand alone and hold your own? Does that mean I might have to steal a car or beat up somebody or commit a burglary?

RAT-NECK: Right.

BING: Is there another way?

RAT-NECK: You can be good from the shoulders.

L'I'L MONSTER: Yeah. Fighting.

TEE: That's one of *the* best ways. A homeboy says: I'm young and mean and my mind's more keen  
And I've earned a rep with my hands  
And I'm eager to compete with the bangers  
on the street  
'Cause I've got ambitious plans.

L'I'L MONSTER: See, when Tee was comin' up—he's *first* generation and we *second* generation. Now, if he saw me, he wouldn't be comin' from the pants pocket with a gat or a knife, he'd be comin' from his shoulders like a fighter. That's what it was established on. Then, later on, come a whole bunch of cowards that *can't* come from the shoulders, so they come from the pocket—



RAT-NECK: —he unloads!

BING: What's the most popular weaponry?

B-DOG: Whatever you get your hands on.

TEE: Keep in mind we don't have no target ranges and shit where we get prolific with these guns.

B-DOG: Shoot 'til you out of bullets, then back up.

RAT-NECK: Bullet ain't got no name, hit whatever it hit.

TEE: Wait a minute! That was a hell of a question, 'cause the mentality of the people that gonna read this be thinkin'—

LI'L MONSTER:—every gang member walks around with that type of gun—

TEE:—and I can hear the police chief saying, "That's why we need bazookas!" Look, put it on the record that everybody ain't got a mother-fuckin' bazooka—or an Uzi. Okay?

BING: It's all on the record.

B-DOG: There *are* some people still believe in .22s.

TEE: Or ice picks. And don't forget the bat.

RAT-NECK: And the lock in the sock!

BING: Are there little peewees, say, nine- to ten-year-olds, in the sets?

RAT-NECK: Yeah, but we say "Li'l Loc" or "Li'l Homie" or "Baby Homie." We never use "peewee" because then people think you're a Mexican. Mexicans say "peewee."

TEE: If it's a Blood set, they use a *k* instead of a *c*. Li'l lok with a *k*. See, Bloods don't say *c*'s and Crips don't say *b*'s. To a Blood, a cigarette is a "bigarette." And Crips don't say "because," they say "cecause."

BING: What prompted you to join, Li'l Monster?

LI'L MONSTER: Say we're white and we're rich. We're in high school and we been buddies since grammar school. And we all decide to go to the same college. Well, we all on the same street, all those years, and we all just decide to—

RAT-NECK:—join the gang.

TEE: What I think is formulating here is that human nature wants to be accepted. A human being gives less of a damn what he is accepted into. At that age—eleven to seventeen—all kids want to belong. They are un-people.

BING: If you move—can you join another set?

LI'L MONSTER: A couple weeks ago I was talking to a friend 'bout this guy—I'll call him "Iceman." He used to be from Eight-Trey, but he moved to Watts. Now he's a Bounty Hunter.

B-DOG: Boy, that stinks, you know?

BING: He went from the Crips to the Bloods?

LI'L MONSTER: Yeah. And he almost lost his life.

TEE: When you switch sets, when you go from Cuz to Blood, or Blood to Cuz, there's a jacket on you, and you are really pushed to prove yourself for that set. Sometimes the set approves it, and other times they cast you out. If you don't have loyalty to the *first* set you belong to, what the fuck makes us think that you gonna be loyal to us? That's just too much *information*. Shit, we kickin' it, we hangin', bangin', and slangin'. But who the fuck are you, and where are you *really* at? Where your *heart* at?

B-DOG: Perpetrated is what he is!

BING: What does that mean?

TEE: A perpetrator is a fraud, a bullshitter.

BING: How can someone prove himself?

LI'L MONSTER: All right, like the cat Iceman. They might say, "To prove yourself as a Bounty Hunter you go hit somebody from Eight-Trey."

B-DOG: If you got that much love.

BING: Hit somebody from the very set he was in?

RAT-NECK: Yeah. Then his loyalty is there.

BING: But is it really? Wouldn't someone say, "Hey, he hit his homeboy, what's to say he won't hit us if he changes his mind again?"

TEE: Look, when he changes sets, he's already got a jacket on his ass. And when he goes back and takes somebody else out, that cuts all ties, all love.

B-DOG: Can't go to no 'hood. Can't go nowhere.

RAT-NECK: There it is.

TEE: The highest honor you can give for your set is death. When you die, when you go out in a blaze of glory, you are respected. When you kill for your set, you earn your stripes—you put work in.

RAT-NECK: But once you a Crip—no matter what—you can't get out. No matter what, woo-wah-wham, you still there. I can leave here for five years. Then I gets out of jail, I gets a new haircut, new everything. Then, "Hey, there goes Rat-Neck!" You can't hide your face. You can't hide nothin'! All that immunity stuff—that's trash. Nobody forgets you.

TEE: That's how it goes. Just like L.A.P.D.—once he retire and shit, that fool still the police! He's still strapped, carrying a gun. He's *always* a cop. Same with us. If you know the words, sing along: "When you're a Jet, you're a Jet all the

way, from your first cigarette to your last dying day."

LI'L MONSTER: There you go.

## Hangin', Bangin', Slangin'

BING: Once you're a Blood or a Crip, do you dress differently? We hear about guys with their jeans riding low, their underwear showing up top, wearing colors, and having a certain attitude.

TEE: See, a lot of that is media shit. A brother will get up, take his time, spray his hair, put his French braids in, fold his rag, press his Pendleton or his khaki top, put creases in his pants, lace his shoes, and hit the streets.

LI'L MONSTER: He's dressed to go get busy!

TEE: He's dressed, pressed, he's down!

BING: Is that the way you dress after you're in?

TEE: The reason a lot of brothers wear khaki and house slippers and shit like that is because it's cheap and comfortable.

B-DOG: Ain't no dress code nowadays.

LI'L MONSTER: Look, Rat-Neck got on a blue hat, I got on this hat, we Crips. B-Dog's a Blood: he got red stripes on his shoes, and *that* is that. Now I can be in the mall, look at his shoes, and know he's a Blood. He can look at my shoes—these B-K's I got on—and say, "He's a Crip."

RAT-NECK: But then again, might be none of that. Might just be ordinary guys.

BING: I've always thought that B-K stands for "Blood Killers" and that's why Crips wear them.

LI'L MONSTER: It stands for British Knights. I don't buy my clothes because they blue. My jacket and my car is red and white. I wear the colors I want to wear. I don't have no blue rag in my pocket. I don't have no blue rubber bands in my hair. But I can be walking down the street and, nine times out of ten, the police gonna hem me up, label me a gangbanger—

RAT-NECK:—or a dope dealer.

LI'L MONSTER: There's only one look that you got to have. Especially to the police. You got to look black. *That's* the look. Now B-Dog here's a Blood, and he doesn't even have to be gangbanging because if I'm in a mall with some of my homeboys, nine times out of ten we gonna look at him *crazy*. That's how you know. He don't have to have no red on, we gonna look at him *crazy*. *That's* the mentality.

TEE: Let me give up this, and you correct me if I'm wrong: police officers can recognize police offi-

cers, athletes can recognize athletes, gay people can recognize gay people. Well, we can recognize each other. It's simple.

BING: When someone insults you, what happens?

LI'L MONSTER: Depends on what he saying.

BING: Say he calls you "crab" or "E-ricket." Or, if you're a Blood, he calls you a "slob." These are fighting words, aren't they?

RAT-NECK: It's really just words. Words anybody use. But really, a lot of that word stuff don't get people going nowadays.

LI'L MONSTER: That's right.

TEE: There was a time when you could say something about somebody's mama, and you got to fight. Not so anymore.

LI'L MONSTER: Now just ignore the fool.

TEE: But if somebody say, "Fuck your dead homeboys," oh, *now* we got a problem.

LI'L MONSTER: Yeah, that's right.

TEE: Somebody call me "oo-lah" or "slob," fuck 'em. My rebuttal to that is "I'm a super lok-ed out Blood." There's always a cap back, see what I'm saying? But when you get down to the basics, like, "Fuck your dead homeboy," and you *name* the homeboy, that is death. Oh man, we got to take *this* to the grave.

BING: Well, let's say you're with your homeboys and someone does say, "Fuck your dead homeboys." What happens then?

B-DOG: That's it. The question of the matter is on, right there, *wherever* you at.

LI'L MONSTER: He's dead. And if he's not, he's gonna—

B-DOG:—wish he was.

BING: What does that mean?

TEE: I cannot believe the readers of this magazine are that naive. The point of the matter is, if he disrespects the dead homeboys, his ass is gonna get got. Period. Now let your imagination run free; Steven Spielberg does it.

BING: Why this intensity?

TEE: Because there's something called dedication that we got to get into—dedication to the gang mentality—and understanding where it's coming from. It's like this: there's this barrel, okay? All of us are in it together, and we all want the same thing. But some of us are not so highly motivated to be educated. So we have to get ours from the blood, the sweat, and the tears of the street. And if a homeboy rises up—and it is not so much jealousy as it is the fear of him *leaving*



me—I want to come up *with* him, but when he reaches the top of the barrel, I grab him by the pants leg and I—

TEE and LI'L MONSTER:—pull him back down.

TEE: It's not that I don't want to see you go home, but *take me with you!* As a man, I'm standing alone as an individual. But I can't say that to him! I got that manly pride that won't let me break down and say, "Man, I'm scared! Take me with you—I want to go with you!" Now, inside this barrel, we are in there so tight that every time we turn around we are smelling somebody's ass or somebody else's stinky breath. There's so many people, I got to leave my community to change my fuckin' mind!

RAT-NECK: Yeah!

TEE: That's how strong peer pressure is! It's that crab-in-the-barrel syndrome. We are just packed in this motherfucker, but I want to feel good. So how? By bustin' a nut. So I fuck my broad, she get pregnant, and now I got *another* baby. So we in there even tighter. In here, in this room, we can relax, we can kick it, we can laugh, we can say, "Well, shit—homeboy from Hoover's all right." Because we in a setting now, and nobody's saying, "FUCK HIM UP, BLOOD! FUCK HIS ASS! I DON'T LIKE HIM—KICK HIS ASS!" You know what I'm saying? That's *bullshit!* We can't just sit down and enjoy each other and say, "Are you a man? Do you wipe your ass like I wipe my ass? Do you cut? Do you bleed? Do you cry? Do you die?" There's nowhere where we can go and just experience each other as *people*. And then, when we do do that, everybody's strapped.

RAT-NECK: Seems like nothin' else...

BING: You make it sound inescapable. What would you tell someone coming along? What would you tell a younger brother?

RAT-NECK: I had a younger brother, fourteen years old. He's dead now, but we never did talk about it. He was a Blood and I am a Crip, and I *know* what time it is. I couldn't socialize with him on what he do. All he could do is ask me certain things, like, "Hey, bro, do you think I'm doing the right thing?" And, well, all I could say is, "Hey, man, choose what you wanna be. What can I do? I love you, but what do I look like, goin' to my mama, tellin' her I *smoked* you, *smoked* my brother? What I look like? But why should I neglect you because you from there? Can't do that. You my love." And if I don't give a fuck about my love, and I don't give a fuck about my brother, then I don't give a fuck about my mama. And then your ass out, when you don't give a fuck about your mama.

Like some people say, "I don't give a fuck, I'll *smoke* my mama!" Well, you know, that's stupidity shit.

BING: I realize that loyalty is paramount. But what I want to know is, if a rival set has it out for someone, does it always mean death?

LI'L MONSTER: Before anybody go shooting, it's going to be, "What is the problem?" Then we are going to find the root of the problem. "Do you personally have something against Eight-Trey?" You say, "No, I just don't like what one of your homeboys did." Then you all beat him up.

*There's only one  
look you got to have.  
Especially to the police.  
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That's the look*

B-DOG: Beat him up, yeah.

LI'L MONSTER: Just head it up. Ain't nobody else going to get in this.

BING: Head it up?

LI'L MONSTER: Fight. One on one. You know, head up. And then it's over.

BING: Are you friends after that?

LI'L MONSTER: Well, you not sending each other Christmas cards.

BING: What if you just drive through another gang's turf? Are you in danger?

LI'L MONSTER: Yeah. I mean, I could be sitting at a light, and somebody say, "That's that fool, Li'l Monster," and they start shooting. That could be anywhere. Barr! Bam! Bam!

BING: Are you targeted by reputation?

LI'L MONSTER: Yeah. That's my worst fear, to be sitting at a light.

B-DOG: That's one of mine, too.

LI'L MONSTER: So I don't stop. I don't pull up right behind a car. And I am always looking around.

B-DOG: Always looking.

LI'L MONSTER: That's my worst fear because *we* did so much of it. You know, you pull up, man, block him in, and—

B-DOG:—that was it.

L'I'L MONSTER: They put in work. That is my worst fear. And if you ever ride with me, you notice I always position myself where there is a curb. That middle lane is no-man's-land.

B-DOG: That's dangerous.

L'I'L MONSTER: You know how they say, "Look out for the other guy"? Well, I *am* the other guy. Get out of my way. Give me the starting position. You know, because I can—phew! Claustrophobia. I seen that shit happenin', man. I be that shit happenin', man, and I don't *never* want that to happen to me, just to be sitting at the light and they take your whole head off.

BING: Say everybody's fired up to get somebody from an enemy set, but there's this young kid who says, "I can't do that. I don't feel right about it—this is a friend of mine." What's going to happen?

L'I'L MONSTER: There's many ways that it can be dealt with. Everybody can disown him, or everybody can just say, "Okay, *fine*, but you gotta do something else." See what I'm saying?

B-DOG: But he's gonna be disciplined one way or the other.

RAT-NECK: 'Cause he know everything, man, and he think he gonna ride on up outta here?

L'I'L MONSTER: So you go home and say, "Yeah, mama. I got out, mama. Everything's cool." And mama looking at you like—"Son, are you sure?" 'Cause she knows damn well those motherfuckers ain't gonna let you go that easy.

TEE: Now that's the flip side to those motherfuckers who say, "I smoke *anybody*—I'll smoke my mama!" We, as homeboys, look at him and say, "Your mama carried you nine months and shitted you out, and if you'll kill your mama, I know you don't give two shakes of a rat's rectum about me!"

RAT-NECK: He'll kill me. He'll smoke me.

BING: What's going to happen in 1989? Los Angeles has the highest body count ever. More deaths than in Ireland.

RAT-NECK: Not more than New York. In New York they kill you for just a penny. I took a trip to New York one time. This guy wanted me to see what it was like.

BING: You mean gang life in New York City?

RAT-NECK: No, to see how people live—gang life, the whole environment, the whole everything. I was there for two days, right? He took us to Queens, Harlem, the Bronx—everywhere. We talked about going out strapped. He said,

"What the fuck, you can't go out there strapped! What's wrong with you?" But I say I gotta let 'em know what time it is and carry *something*, you know, 'cause we don't really know what's going on in New York. But we hear so *much* about New York, how they operate, how rough it's supposed to be. So, okay, we decide we gonna carry a buck knife—something. So we kickin', walkin', cruisin' the street, everything. And then I see a homeboy standin' right here next to me.

And he come up to us and do some shit like this: he take three pennies, shake 'em, and throw 'em down in front of his shoe. We, like, what the fuck is this? Is it, you got a beef? Like, he knew we weren't from there. So we not lookin' at him, but, like, why the fuck he throw three pennies down there? Like, was it, "Get off our turf"? But we didn't understand his language. Out here, it's like, "What's happenin'? What's up, Cuz? What's up, Blood?" But in New York, you lookin' at the damn pennies, and maybe he come back and hit you. Maybe if you pick up the pennies, then you got a beef with him. Maybe if you don't pick 'em up, then you supposed to walk off. But shit, we lookin' at the pennies, and lookin' at him, and it's like *goddamn*! So we walks off and leaves the Bronx and goes to Harlem.

Oh, man—that's what you call a gutter. You get to lookin' around there and thinking, "God-damn, these my people? Livin' like *this*? Livin' in a cardboard box?" I mean, skid row got it goin' on next to Harlem. Skid row look like *Hollywood* to them.

## Kickin' It

BING: Did you vote in the last election?

TEE: Yeah, I voted. But look at the choice I had: Bush bastard and Dumb-kakis.

RAT-NECK: A bush and a cock.

BING: Why didn't you vote for Jesse in the primary?

TEE: I truly believe that shit rigged. Everybody I know voted for Jesse, but—

B-DOG:—Jesse was out.

RAT-NECK: It's different for us. Like, what's that guy's name shot President Reagan? What happened to that guy? *Nothin'*!

BING: He's in prison.

L'I'L MONSTER: Oh no he's not. He's in a *hospital*.

TEE: They're *studym*' him.

RAT-NECK: See, they did that to cover his ass. They say he retarded or something.



B-DOG: See, if I had shot Reagan, would they have put me in a mental facility?

RAT-NECK: They would have put you away right there where you shot him. Bam—judge, jury, executioner.

TEE: Why is it they always study white folks when they do heinous crimes, but they never study us? We got black psychiatrists.

BING: What about all this killing, then?

TEE: I'm gonna shut up now, because the way the questions are coming, you portray us as animals. Gangbanging is a way of life. You got to touch it, smell it, feel it. Hearing the anger, the frustration, and the desperation of all of us only adds to what the media's been saying—and it's worse, coming out of *our* mouths. There has to be questions directed with an understanding of our point of view. Sorry.

BING: All right. Ask one.

TEE: It's not my interview.

BING: I'm trying to understand your motives. Let me ask a different question: If a homeboy is killed, how is the funeral conducted?

TEE: You got four different sets here in this room, and each set has its own rules and regulations.

RAT-NECK: Okay, like, my little brother just got killed. You talkin' funeralwise, right? At this funeral, Bloods and Crips was there. But didn't nobody wear nothin', just suits. *Every* funeral you go to is not really colors.

TEE: Thank you! Yeah!

RAT-NECK: You just going to give your last respect. Like my little brother, it really tripped me out, the way I seen a big "B" of flowers with red roses in it, and one tiny *blue* thing they brought. And these were *Bloods*!—goddamn! Like one of my homeboys asked me, "What's happenin', Rat?" and I said, "Hey, man—you tell *me*." And I

## A Gangbanger's Glossary

**Baller:** a gangbanger who is making money; also *high roller*

**Cap:** a retort

**Click up:** to get along well with a homeboy

**Crab:** insulting term for a Crip; also *E-ricket*

**Cuz:** alternative name for a Crip; often used in a greeting, e.g., "What's up, Cuz?"

**Down:** to do right by your homeboys; to live up to expectations; to protect your turf, e.g., "It's the job of the homeboys to be down for the 'hood"

**Gangbanging:** the activities of a gang

**Gat:** gun

**Give it up:** to admit to something

**Hangin', bangin', and slangin':** to be out with the homeboys, talking the talk, walking the walk; slang-in' comes from "slinging" or selling dope

**Head up:** to fight someone one-on-one

**Hemmed up:** to be hassled or arrested by the police

**'Hood:** neighborhood; turf

**Homeboy:** anyone from the same neighborhood or gang; a friend or an accepted person; in a larger sense, a person from the inner city; also *homie*

**Jacket:** a record or a reputation, both within the gang and at the police station

**Jumped in:** initiated into a gang; getting jumped in typically entails being beaten up by the set members

**Kickin' it:** kicking back, relaxing with your homeboys

**Loc-ed out:** also *lok-ed out*; from "loco," meaning ready and willing to do anything

**Make a move:** commit a crime; also *manipulate*

**Mark:** someone afraid to commit a crime; also *punk*

**O.G.:** an abbreviation for Original Gangster; i.e., a gang member who has been in the set for a long time and has made his name

**Oo-lah:** insulting term for a Blood; also *slob*

**Perpetrate:** betray your homeboys; bring shame on yourself and your set

**Put in work:** any perilous activity from fighting to murder that benefits the set or the gang

**Set:** any of the various neighborhood gangs that fit within the larger framework of Bloods and Crips

**Smoke:** to kill someone

**Top it off:** to get along well with someone; reach an understanding

looked around, saw some other guys there, you know? They ain't us, but they came and showed respect, so—move back. Couple of them walked by us, looked at us, and said, "That's our homeboy, that's Rat-Neck's brother."

When he got killed, you know, I had a whole lot of animosity. I'd smoke any damn one of 'em, but one thing—one thing about it—it *wasn't black people who did it*. That's the one thing that didn't make me click too much. Now, if a black person woulda did it, ain't no tellin' where I'd be right now, or what I'd do, or how I'd feel. I'd be so confused I might just straight out fuck my job, my wife, my kid, whatever, and say, "I don't give a fuck about you—bro got killed!"

BING: How did he get killed?

RAT-NECK: I don't really know the whole rundown.

## He got a Ph.D. from SWU. That's a Pimp and Hustler Degree from Sidewalk University

TEE: What Rat-Neck's saying is the respect. We buried three of our own yesterday, and for each one we went to the mother to see how she wanted it—

LI'L MONSTER:—how she wanted it! That's it!

TEE: 'Cause the mother carried that baby for nine months—that's her *child*. It's *her* family, and we're the extended family. She got the first rights on what goes on there. It's the respect factor that lies there, and if the mother says there's no colors, you better believe ain't no colors!

RAT-NECK: And no cartridges in the coffin.

TEE: If he went out in a blaze of glory, and his mama say, "You all bury him like you want to bury him"—oh, then we *do* it."

BING: How would that be?

TEE: If he was a baller—you know what I'm saying—then everybody get suited and booted.

BING: Do you mean a sea of colors?

EVERYONE: NO! Suits and ties! Shined shoes!

LI'L MONSTER: Jump in the silk!

TEE: We own suits, you know! Brooks Brothers,

C and R Clothiers! And some of the shit is tailored!

BING: You mention your mothers a lot, and I sense a love that's very real. If you do love your moms so much and you kill each other, then it has to be the mothers who ultimately suffer the worst pain. How do you justify that?

B-DOG: Your mother gonna suffer while you living, anyway. While you out there gangbangin', she's suffering. My mother's suffering right now. All my brothers in jail.

RAT-NECK: My mother's sufferin', sittin' in her living room, and maybe there's a bullet comin' in the window.

BING: What do you say to your mother when she says, "All your brothers are in jail, and you're out there in danger"?

B-DOG: We don't even get *into* that no more.

RAT-NECK: She probably don't think about that at all—just so she can cope with it.

B-DOG: Me and my mother don't discuss that no more, because I been into this for so long, you know. When me and my mother be together, we try to be happy. We don't talk about the gang situation.

LI'L MONSTER: Me and my mother are real tight, you know? We talk like sister and brother. I don't try to justify myself to her—any more than she tries to justify *her* work or how she makes her money to me. What I do *may* come back to hurt her, but what *she* does may also come back to hurt me. Say I'm thirteen and I'm staying with my mother, and she goes off on her boss and loses her job—how does she justify that to *me*?

BING: Well, the loss of a job is not quite the same as an actively dangerous life-style in the streets, wouldn't you agree?

TEE: "An actively dangerous life-style"—that really fucks me up. Okay, here we go. "Woman" is a term that means "of man." *Wo-man*. My mother raised me, true enough. Okay? And she was married. There was a male figure in the house. But I never accepted him as my father. My mother can only teach me so much 'bout being a man-child in the Promised Land. If, after that, there is nothing for me to take pride in, then I enter into manhood asshole backwards, and I stand there, a warrior strong and proud. But there is no outlet for that energy, for me or my brothers, so we *turn on each other*.

So, Mom sends us to the show, and all we get is Clint Eastwood, *Superfly*, and *Sweet Sweet Bad Ass*. Now what goes up on the silver screen comes down into the streets, and now you got a homeboy. And mama says, "I don't want you to



go to your grave as a slave for the minimum wage." So you say, "I am going to go get us something, make this better, pay the rent."

The first thing a successful athlete does—and you can check me out—is buy his mama a big-ass house. That's what we want. And if we have to get it from the streets, that's where we go.

BING: Why?

TEE: It's the same *everywhere*. A sorority, a fraternity, the Girl Scouts, camping club, hiking club, L.A.P.D., the Los Angeles Raiders, are all the same. Everything that you find in those groups and institutions you find in a gang.

BING: So are you saying there's no difference between the motives of you guys joining a gang and, say, a young WASP joining a fraternity?

RAT-NECK: You got a lot of gangbangers out there who are smart. They want it. They *got* what it takes. But the difference is they got no money.

TEE: I know a homie who had a scholarship to USC. But he left school because he found prejudice *alive* in America, and it cut him out. He said, "I don't have to stand here and take this. As a matter of fact, you owe my great-grandfather forty acres and a mule."

L'L MONSTER: Forget the mule, just give me the forty acres.

TEE: So he took to the streets. He got a Ph.D. from SWU. That's a Pimp and Hustler Degree from Sidewalk University.

BING: If it went the other way, what would your life be like?

RAT-NECK: I'm really a hardworking man. I make bed mattresses now, but I would like to straight out be an engineer, or give me a day-care center with little kids coming through, and get me the hell away as far as I can. All I want to do is be myself and not perpetrate myself, try not to perpetrate my black people. Just give me a job, give me a nice house—everybody dream of a nice home—and just let me deal with it.

BING: And how do drugs figure into this?

L'L MONSTER: Wait a minute. I just want to slide in for a minute. I want to set the record straight. People think gangs and drugs go hand in hand, but they don't. If I sell drugs, does that make me a gangbanger? No. If I gangbang, does that make me sell drugs? No. See, for white people—and I am not saying for all white people, just like what I say about black people is not for all black people—they go for college, the stepping-stone to what they want to get. And some black people look to drugs as a stepping-stone to get the same thing.

B-DOG: They want to live better. To buy what they want. To get a house.

RAT-NECK: Not worry about where the next meal come from.

TEE: To live comfortable and get a slice of American Pie, the American Dream.

B-DOG: There it is.

TEE: The Army came out with a hell of a slogan: "Be all you can be." And that's it.

We all want the same thing. We've been taught by television, the silver screen, to grow up and have a chicken in every pot, two Chevys, 2.3 kids in the family. So we have been taught the same thing that you have been taught, but there is certain things that we can hold on to and other things that—we see them, but we just cannot reach them. Most of us are dealing with the reality of surviving as opposed to, "Well, my dad will take care of it."

BING: Are you saying that gangbanging is just another version of the American Dream?

L'L MONSTER: It's like this. You got the American Dream over there, and you reaching for it. But you can't get it. And you got dope right here, real close. You can grab it easy. Dealing with the closer one, you might possibly make enough money to grab the other one. Then you throw away the dope. That's a big *if* now.

BING: Seriously, does anybody ever stop dealing?

B-DOG: If you was making a million dollars off of drugs, you know what I'm saying, are you gonna give that up for a legitimate business?

TEE: This goes back to it. You started out for need, and now you stuck in it because of greed. That's when you play your life away. There comes a time when you have to stop playing, but as far as the streets go, you are a *street player*. Now there may come a time when you say, all right, I've played, I've had time in the gang, now I got to raise up. But if you is so greedy that you cannot smell the coffee, then you're cooked.

BING: But if you do get out, do you always have to come back when your homeboys call?

L'L MONSTER: It ain't like you gonna be called upon every month.

B-DOG: But if you gets called, then you must be needed, and you must come.

L'L MONSTER: It's like this—and I don't care who you are, where you started, or how far you got—you *never* forget where you come from.

TEE: That's it.

B-DOG: You *never* forget where you come from. ■

*Anton Shammas, an Israeli-Palestinian, is the author of Arabesques, a novel.*

## Declaration

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# THE AMBIGUITY

Text, by Anton Shammas

## ence

for those who are just and for whom justice is the only recourse.

In the context of its struggle for peace in the Land of Love and Peace, the State of Palestine calls upon the United Nations to bear special responsibility for the Palestinian Arab people and its homeland. It calls upon all peace- and freedom-loving peoples and states to assist it in the attainment of its objectives, to provide it with security, to alleviate the tragedy of its people, and to help it terminate Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the UN Charter and resolutions. Without prejudice to its natural right to define its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against the territorial integrity of other states.

Therefore, on this day unlike all others, November 15, 1988, as we stand at the threshold of a new dawn, in all honor and modesty we humbly bow to the sacred spirits of our fallen ones, Palestinian and Arab, by the purity of whose sacrifice for the homeland our sky has been illuminated and our land given life. Our hearts are lifted up and irradiated by the light emanating from the much blessed *Intifada*, from those who have endured and have fought the fight of the camps, of dispersion, of exile, from those who have borne the standard of freedom, our children, our aged, our youth, our prisoners, detainees and wounded, all those whose ties to our sacred soil are confirmed in camp, village and town. We render special tribute to that brave Palestinian woman, guardian of sustenance and life, keeper of our people's perennial flame. To the souls of our Palestinian martyrs, to the whole of our Palestinian Arab people, to all free and honorable peoples everywhere, we pledge that our struggle shall be continued until the occupation ends, and the foundation of our sovereignty and independence shall be fortified accordingly.

Therefore, we call upon our great people to rally to the banner of Palestine, to cherish and defend it, so that it may forever be the symbol of our freedom and dignity in that homeland, which is a dignity in that homeland, which is a homeland for the free now and always.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.  
"Say, O God, Master of the Kingdom, Thou givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt, and seizest the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt, Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt, in Thy hand is the good, Thou art powerful over everything."

Sadaga Allahu al-Azim

**Be Informed  
Read Al-Fajr**

"Dispossession," and (below) "prevarication and negation," gives it away—Edward Said wrote the official English translation. The Arabic original is believed to have been drafted by committee, then rewritten by the poet Mahmoud Darwish (he is rumored to have kept Ben-Gurion's Israeli declaration in front of him for guidance); the Darwish text (according to Said) was then "covered with often ludicrously clumsy insertions and inexplicable deletions." Said did quite a good job not only with the English (he is a literary critic!) but with cutting the schmaltz in both the Arabic and the unofficial English texts. The Arabic text is too much to chew: too large a pita, too little butter. With declarations, as with so much else since '47, the Jews got a better deal.

"Rejects," more than any other word, has stirred the embers of ambiguity. Only when Arafat later tried "renounces" did he manage to clear things up for the State Department—though not for the Israelis, of course. This paragraph, I should mention, draws heavily on UN Resolution 181 (1947), which called for each of the states to be created by partition "to refrain in its international relations from the threat or use of force [my emphases] against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State." Worth noting, too: The Israeli Declaration of Independence says nothing about rejecting, condemning, or renouncing the use of violence—although I am sure that there are many villagers in the Occupied Territories who wish that it did.

An unequivocally nonsecular ending—is this it for the long-promised secular democratic state? Let's hope it is meant only to assuage ardent Muslim groups in Gaza and religious members of the PNC. And herein lies my point: The Palestinian Declaration of Independence is a *political* document, a result of give-and-take (between Palestinians), meant to inspire give-and-take (with Israel and the other key player, the United States). Ambiguity is the hallmark of all such documents—I seem to remember Camp David being *praised* for subtle ambiguities that could lead to progress. Let me clearly state that ambiguity should be the privilege not only of states but of stateless exiles and refugees.

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# IN LOVE WITH ARIADNE

By William Trevor

**I**mages cluster, fragments make up the whole. The first of Barney's memories is of an upturned butter box—that particular shape, narrower at the bottom. It's in a corner of the garden where the grass grows high, where there are poppies and pinks among the stones that edge a flower bed. A dog pants, its paws stretched out on the grass, its tongue trailing from its mouth. Barney picks the pinks and decorates the dog with them, sticking them into his brindle fur. "Oh, you are bold!" The hem of the skirt is blue, the shoes black. The hat Barney has thrown off is placed again on his head. He has a stick shaped like a finger, bent in the middle. It is hard and shiny and he likes it because of that. The sunshine is hot on his skin. There is a baby's perspiration.

Barney's mother died three years after his birth, but even so his childhood was not unhappy. In the garden at Lisscrea there was Charlie Redmond to talk to, and Nuala was in the kitchen. "Dr. G. T. Prenderville," the brass plate on the wall by the hall door said, and all over the neighborhood Barney's father was known for his patience and his kindness—a bulky man in a tweed suit, his graying hair brushed straight back, his forehead tanned, a watch chain looped across his waistcoat. Charlie Redmond made up doggerel and twice a day came to the kitchen for cups of tea, leaving behind him a basket of peas or beetroot or whatever was in season. Because of the slanderous nature of his doggerel, Nuala called him a holy terror.

*William Trevor's most recent book is The Silence in the Garden, a novel.*

Lisscrea House, standing by the roadside covered with Virginia creeper. There were on one side and on the other the Mulpatt cottage. Beyond that was the Edderys' cot and an iron gate that separated it from W public house—single-storied and whitewashed like the cottages. Opposite, across the were the ruins of a square tower, with brambles growing through them. A mile to the west was the Catholic church, behind white railings with a shrine glorifying the Virgin just inside the gates. All the rooms at Lisscrea were small and narrow, each with a different, floral wallpaper. In the hall the patients sat on a row of chairs that stretched between the front door and the stairs, waiting silently until Dr. Prenderville was ready. Sometimes a man would draw a cart or trap outside, or dismount from a bicycle, and the doorbell would jangle urgently. "Always listen carefully to what's said at the door," Dr. Prenderville instructed Nuala. "I'm out, write a message down."

When Barney was seven he went to school at Ballinadra, waiting every morning on the road for Whelan's cart on its way to Ballinacorney creamery with churns of milk. The bread was brought him back in the afternoon, and nothing changed until he was allowed to cycle. Dr. Prenderville's old Rudge with its saddle and handlebars lowered. "Up the airy mount," Miss Bone's thin voice enunciated in the schoolroom. Her features were pale and slender, her fingers stained red with ink. "There she is, Miss Bone," Charlie Redmond's cruel doggerel recorded. "She's always alone." Miss Bone was tenderhearted and said to be in love with



, the school's headmaster, a married  
Quod erat demonstrandum," Mr. Gargan  
y repeated in gravelly tones.

he Sunday before he made the journey to  
on the Rudge for the first time, Barney  
his father listening to the wireless in the  
g room, a thing he never did on a Sunday  
ing. Nuala was standing in the doorway  
dishcloth in her hand, listening also.  
have to buy tea, she said, because she'd  
it would be short, and Dr. Prenderville  
ey'd have to keep the curtains drawn at  
s a protection against being bombed from  
oplane. Charlie Redmond had told Bar-  
few days before that the Germans ate  
bread. The Germans were in league with  
alians, who ate stuff that looked like  
De Valera, Charlie Redmond said,  
keep the country out of things.

war that began then continued for the  
on of Barney's time at school. Lisscrea was  
d by the shortages that Nuala had antici-  
and De Valera did not surrender the will  
tain at peace. It was during those years  
arney decided to follow in his father's and  
his grandfather's footsteps and be-  
come the doctor at Lisscrea.

**L**ow're the digs?" Rouge Medlicott  
and the Pole, Slovinski, again beckoned  
waitress—not because he required more cof-  
because he liked the look of her.

ful," Barney said. "I'm moving out."

en he'd arrived in Dublin at the begin-  
f the term he found he had not been allo-  
a set of college rooms and had been  
d to settle for unsatisfactory lodgings in  
aoghair. Greyhounds cluttered the stairs  
house and broke into a general barking  
igned provocation. Two occupied a terri-  
hey had made their own beneath the  
-room table, their cold noses forever in-  
ating whatever flesh they could find be-  
the top of Barney's socks and the turnups  
trousers. Rouge Medlicott and Slovinski  
college rooms and at night pursued amo-  
ventures in O'Connell Street, picking up  
ho'd been left in the lurch outside cine-  
ice-cream parlors.

hy doesn't she come to me?" Slovinski de-  
ed crossly, still waving at the waitress.  
cause you're bloody ugly," Medlicott re-

dents filled the café. They shouted to one  
er across plates of iced buns, their books  
e floor beside their chairs, their gowns  
n anywhere. Long, trailing scarves in  
and white indicated the extroverts of the  
Club. Scholars were recognized by their  
st eyes, sizars by their poverty. Nigerians

didn't mix. There were tablefuls of engineers  
and medical practitioners of the future, bota-  
nists and historians and linguists, geographers  
and eager divinity students. Rouge Medlicott  
and Slovinski were of an older generation, two  
of the many ex-servicemen of that time. Among  
these students were G.I.'s and Canadians and  
Czechs, a couple of Scots, a solitary Egyptian,  
and balding Englishmen who talked about Cecil  
Sharp or played bridge.

"You meet me tonight," Slovinski suggested  
in a peremptory manner, having at last succeed-  
ed in summoning the waitress. "What about  
tonight?"

"Tonight, sir?"

"We'll have oysters in Flynn's."

"Oh God, you're shocking, sir!" cried the  
waitress, hurrying away.

Barney had gotten to know Slovinski and  
Rouge Medlicott through sitting next to them  
in biology lectures. He didn't think of them as  
friends exactly, but he enjoyed their company.  
Medlicott had acquired his sobriquet because of  
the color of his hair, a quiff of which trailed lan-  
guorously over his forehead. There was a hint of  
flamboyance in his attire—usually a green vel-  
vet suit and waistcoat, a green shirt, and a bulky  
green tie. His shoes were of soft, pale suede. He  
was English and notably good-looking. Slo-  
vinski was small and bald and still wore a mili-  
tary uniform—a shade of blue—that Medlicott  
claimed he had bought in a lost-property office.  
Slovinski could play part of Beethoven's Fifth  
Symphony on his teeth, with his thumbnails.

"I heard of digs," Medlicott said. "Out near  
the zoo. That Dutch fellow was after them, only  
he decided to go back to Holland instead."

It was in this casual way that Barney first  
came to hear about Gogarty Street, and that  
evening he went out to inspect the lodgings. A  
woman with an orange-powdered face and  
waved black hair, kept tidy beneath a net,  
opened the door to him. A discreet smear of lip-  
stick outlined her lips, and there was a hint of  
eye shadow beneath her myopic-seeming eyes.  
She was wearing a flowered overall, which she  
apologized for as she removed it in the hall. Be-  
neath was a navy blue skirt and a cream-colored  
blouse that had a fox-terrier brooch pinned to  
it. She folded the overall and placed it on the  
hall stand. Normally she would not take in  
boarders, she explained, but the house was too  
large, really, for herself and her mother and her  
daughter, just the three of them. A pity to have  
rooms and not use them, a pity to have them  
empty. The trouble was that smaller houses  
were usually not in districts she cared for. She  
led the way upstairs while still speaking about  
the house and household. "It's a residence that's  
been in the Lenehan family for three gen-

erations," she said. "That's another consideration."

The door of a room on the second floor was open. "Fusty," Mrs. Lenehan said and crossed to the window. The bed was narrow, the bedstead of ornamental iron. There was a washstand with an enamel basin on it and a shaving mirror above it on the wall. There was a wardrobe, a chest of drawers, two holy pictures, and a chair. Patterned, worn linoleum partially covered the floor, leaving a darkly varnished surround. There were net curtains and a blind.

"The bathroom and w.c. are off the landing below," Mrs. Lenehan said. In Mr. Lenehan's childhood there were two maids and a cook in this house, she went on, and in her own day there'd always been a single maid at least, and a

advance would be fair, I think."

"Yes, it would."

"Best to have a clear arrangement, I say. No chance for misunderstandings."

Two days later Barney moved in. When he unpacked his suitcases and was waiting for the gong that Mrs. Lenehan had told him would sound at six o'clock, there was a knock on the door. "I'm Ariadne," Mrs. Lenehan's daughter said, standing in the doorway with a bar of low soap in her hand. "My mother said go on this." She was dark haired, about the same age as Barney. The rather long mauve dress she wore was trimmed with black, and snowflake beads were looped several times around her neck. Her lips were painted, her hands and wrists delicately slender. Large brown eyes

glanced at Barney and with curiosity.

"Thanks very much," he said, taking the soap from her hand.

She nodded and seemed to be not interested in him. Finally she closed the door and he listened to the footfall on the stairs. As light as gossip, he said to himself. He was aware of a pleasant sensation, a tingling of the skin of his face. The girl had brought the room a whiff of new fume, and it remained after she'd gone. He wanted to close the window to keep her in, but he also wanted just to stand there.

The sounding gong roused him from this pleasant reverie. He had never before cared for the appearance of the girls—

even sometimes—whom Medlicott and Sloane admired in cafés or on the streets. Ariadne was different. There was an old-fashioned air about her and an unusualness. As well, Barney considered her beautiful.

"Fennerty's the name," a small, jauntily dressed woman said in the dining room. Wiry white hair grew tidily on a flat-looking head; eyes and beads peered at Barney. "Fennerty's the name," she repeated. "Mrs. Lenehan's mother."

Barney told her who he was. The last part of his room had been employed in the bed-linen department, she replied, and



scrubbing woman once a fortnight. Now you couldn't get a servant for love or money. She noticed Barney glancing at the fireplace, which contained an arrangement of red tissue paper. She said that in the old days there'd have been a fire laid in the grate every morning and coal blazing cheerfully every evening. Now, of course, that was out of the question. "Thirty shillings would be fair, would it? Breakfast and 6 P.M. tea, the extra meal on a Sunday."

Barney said he thought thirty shillings was a reasonable rent for what was offered.

"Of a Friday evening, Mr. Prenderville. In



Con Malley, from Carlow. Now that I had replaced him, the house would be full. There had been difficulty in regaining the rent from Con Malley. Lenehan won't tolerate anything less than emptiness," the old woman warned.

Barney, of about fifty, wearing a navy blue overcoat and tan gloves, entered the dining room. "How're you, Mr. Sheehy?" Mrs. Fennerty inquired.

Barney, showing himself of his coat and gloves and sitting on the seat of a chair by the door, replied that he wasn't so good. He had a receding chin, with features that had a look about them also, and closely cropped hair, nondescript as to color. The reverse of his coat revealed a brown pin-striped waistcoat and a row of pens and pencils clipped into a pocket and a tiny badge, hardly noticeable on the left lapel. This proclaimed Mr. Sheehy's teetotalism, the emblem of the Pious Movement.

"I had a bad debt," Mr. Sheehy said, sitting at the table. Mrs. Fennerty vacated a covered armchair by the fire and took her seat also. Ariadne entered with a laden tray and placed plates of fried food in front of the diners. Mrs. Fennerty said the thick Irish Relish had been finished the evening before and when Ariadne returned to the dining room a minute or so later with a metal tray she brought a bottle of Yorkshire Relish as either she nor her mother joined the party at the dining table.

"Do you know Mattie Higgins?" Mr. Sheehy asked Mrs. Fennerty. When he spoke he had his teeth trapped behind his thin lips, as nervous of their exposure. "I sold him a set. Three pounds fifteen. I had the trouble with him, only when I brought it all he had was a £5 note. 'I'll have that into tonight,' he said. 'Come back in the morning.' Only didn't he die that night in his bed?"

Barney, the old woman crossed herself. "You ought with that one," she said.

Barney's round there at eight o'clock this morning the place was in the hands of five big men. When I mentioned the wireless they gave me the face off of me. A good Pye wireless gone.

Mrs. Fennerty, still consuming her food, looked across the room at the radio on the mantelpiece in a corner. "Is it a Pye Mrs. Lenehan's?"

"No, the Pye's the best."

Barney told that to the daughters. The one I sold only a few fag burns on the cabinet. The other of them laughed at me."

"I know the type."

"Five fat vultures, and your man still warming the bed."

"Strumpets."

The rest of the meal was taken in a silence that wasn't broken until Ariadne came to clear the table. "I meant to have told you," she remarked to Barney. "Your window gets stuck at the top."

He said it didn't matter. He had noticed her mother opening the bottom sash in preference to the top one, he added conversationally. It didn't matter in the least, he said.

"The top's stuck with paint," Ariadne said.

Mrs. Fennerty returned to her place by the fire. Mr. Sheehy put on his navy blue overcoat and his gloves and sat on the chair by the door. Skillfully, with the glass held at an angle, Mrs. Fennerty poured out a bottle of stout that had been placed in the fender to warm. On her invitation, accompanied by a warning concerning hasty digestion, Barney occupied the second rexine-covered armchair, feeling too shy to disobey. Mrs. Fennerty lit a cigarette. She was a boarder the same as Mr. Sheehy, she said. She paid her way, Mrs. Lenehan's mother or not. That was why she sat down in the dining room with Mr. Sheehy and whoever the third boarder happened to be.

"Are you at Dowding's?" She referred to a commercial college that offered courses in accounting and bookkeeping, preparing its students for the bank and brewery examinations.

"No. Not Dowding's." He explained that he was a medical student.

"A doctor buries his mistakes. Did you ever hear that one?" Mrs. Fennerty laughed shrilly, and in a sociable way Barney laughed himself. Mr. Sheehy remained impassive by the door. Barney wondered why he had taken up a position there, with his coat and gloves on.

"Six feet under, no questions asked," Mrs. Fennerty remarked, again laughing noisily.

Dressed to go out, Mrs. Lenehan entered the dining room, and Mr. Sheehy's behavior was explained. He rose to his feet, and when the pair had gone, Mrs. Fennerty said: "Those two are doing a line. Up to the McKee Barracks every evening. Sheehy wouldn't part with the price of anything else. Turn round at the barracks, back by the Guards' Depot. Then he's down in the kitchen with her. That's Ned Sheehy for you."

Barney nodded, not much interested in Mr. Sheehy's courtship of Mrs. Lenehan. Nevertheless, the subject was pursued. "Ned Sheehy has a post with the Hibernian Insurance. That's how he'd be selling wireless sets to people. He calls in at houses a lot."

"I see."

"He's keen on houses, all right. It's the house we're sitting in he has designs on, not Mrs. Lenehan at all."

"Oh, I'm sure—"

"If there's a man in Dublin that knows his bricks and mortar better than Ned Sheehy, give me a gander at him."

Barney said he didn't think he could supply the old woman with such a person, and she said that of course he couldn't. No flies on Ned Sheehy, she said, in spite of what you might think to look at him.

"She made a mistake the first time and she'll make another before she's finished. You could turn that one's head like the wind would turn a weathercock."

Ariadne came in with the *Evening Herald* and handed it to her grandmother. Barney smiled at her, but she didn't notice. Mrs. Fennerty became engrossed in the newspaper. Barney went upstairs.

In time, he heard footsteps in the room above his, and knew they were Ariadne's. They crossed the room to the window. The blind was drawn down. Ariadne crossed the room again, back and forth, back and forth. He knew when she took her shoes off.

**H**andwritten notes clamored for attention on the green baize of the board beside the lodge of the university's porters: love letters, brief lines of rejection, relationships terminated, charges of treachery, a stranger's admiration confessed. The same envelope remained on the baize-covered board for months: "R. R. Woodley," it said, but R. R. Woodley either did not exist or had long since ceased to be an undergraduate. "It is hard to find myself the way I am, and to be alone with not a soul to turn to": a heart was laid bare within the dust-soiled envelope, its ache revealed to the general curiosity. But other notes, on torn half-sheets of exercise paper, remained on the green board for only a few hours, disappearing forever while they were still fresh.

Within their fire-warmed lodge the porters were a suspicious breed of men: well used to attempted circumvention of the law that began where their own rule did. They wore black velvet jockey caps; one carried a mace on ceremonial occasions. They saw to it that bicycles were wheeled through the vast archway they guarded, and that female undergraduates passed in and out during the permitted hours only, and that their book was signed when this was necessary. In the archway itself, posters advertised dances and theatrical productions. Eminent visitors were announced. Societies' account sheets were published. There were reports of missionary work in Africa.

Beyond this entrance, dark facades around a cobbled square. Loops of checked tidily shorn lawns. The chapel stolidly at the pillars of the examination Gold numerals lightened the blue facade of the dining-hall clock. A campanile rose from the square.

Barney attended the lectures of McGusty and Professor Makepeace-Green, the elderly Dr. Posse, who had been at the medical school in his father's time. McGusty was a long-winded young man; Professor Makepeace-Green a tetchily severe woman who particularly objected to Slovinski's *Daily Sketch* during her lectures. McGusty's students of Barney's age keenly took notes, but the recent shedding of discipline by the ex-servicemen left the students less of their academic obligations. "Listen, Slovinski regularly invited, interrupting McGusty's dissertation on the function of the bile ducts by playing Beethoven's teeth."

The medical students favored certain houses: the International Bar, Ryan's on College Street, McFadden's. After an evening of dancing they danced in the Crystal Ballroom, round pots of tea in the café attached to the Green Cinema, where the private lives of their mentors were breezily speculated upon, the most part scorned. On such occasions Slovinski spoke of his wartime liaisons, and McGusty retailed the appetites of a baker's wife. Mrs. Claudia Rigg of Bournemouth. McGusty—years later—this time in his life minutely preserved as his childhood at home. And always, at the heart of the memory, Mrs. Lenehan's household in the street.

**"Y**ou've maybe not come across the Ariadne before," Mrs. Lenehan said once in the hall, adding that she'd found the story in *Model Housekeeping*. Had a son born instead of a daughter, he'd have christened Paul, that being a family name on her own side. As soon as she'd seen "Ariadne" written down she'd settled for it.

Barney liked the name also. He thought of Mrs. Lenehan's daughter, whom he was increasingly finding himself thinking about, particularly during the lectures of Bore McGusty and Professor Makepeace-Green. Ariadne, he discovered, didn't go out to work; her work was in her mother's house, and it was there, during the lectures, that he imagined her. She was busy with the cleaning and the preparation of the house and the washing-up afterward. She was on the stairs with a dustpan and brush; she was at the brass on the front door. Every morning she set the dining-room fire, and lit it even



Once in a while she and her mother  
the windows.

Lenehan occasionally sang while she  
ed her household tasks. Ariadne didn't.  
as no trace of reluctance in her expres-  
sion, a kind of vagueness: she had the look  
of it, Barney found himself thinking once,  
thought remained with him. In the din-  
ing room he was usually the last to finish break-  
fast, liberally dawdling. Ariadne came in  
at last, and, seeing him still at the table, ab-  
sented him by damping the fire down with  
her hand and picking up the mantelpiece orna-  
ments and dusting them. Her elegant hands  
were as delicate as the porcelain she attended  
to. Her clothes never varied: the same shade  
of grey combined repeatedly with mourner's  
black. "Good evening, Mr. Prenderville," she  
always whispered in the dusk of the hall, a  
figure passing from one closed door to

another. He'd been in the lodgings a month, Bar-  
ney was familiar with every movement in the  
house. When Ariadne left it and did not  
return within a few minutes he said to him-  
self that she was washing her hair, which he  
knew was wrapped in a towel, the way Nuala  
did hers before she sat down to dry it at the  
fire. He imagined the glow of an electric fire  
against Ariadne's long, damp tresses. Staring at a  
painted ceiling, he invaded her privacy, in-  
vaded every sound she made with his specula-  
tion. Would she be sewing or embroidering, as  
she did in the evenings? Nuala pressed flow-  
ers between the pages of the medical encyclope-  
dia in the dining room at Lisscree, pansies and  
as she asked Charlie Redmond to bring  
her the garden. Barney wondered if Ariadne  
knew also. He guessed the moment when she  
went to sleep, and lay in the darkness him-  
self, accompanying her to oblivion.

Barney didn't tell Rouge Medlicott and Slo-  
anor anyone else, about Ariadne. In his  
room his father he mentioned Mrs. Lenehan  
and Mrs. Fennerty and Mr. Sheehy: Ariadne  
didn't have existed. Yet in the noisy cafés  
and lecture halls he continued to feel haunt-  
ed by her and wished she was there also. He left  
the house in Gogarty Street reluctantly each  
morning and hurried back to it in the  
evenings.

Ariadne."

Barney addressed her on the first-floor landing  
one Sunday afternoon. His voice was little more  
than a whisper; they were shadows in the dim  
light. "Ariadne," he said again, de-  
terminedly, while they were alone, in this repeti-  
tion of her name.

"Mr. Prenderville?"

Mrs. Lenehan and Mr. Sheehy spent Sunday  
afternoons with Mrs. Fennerty in the dining  
room, listening to a radio commentary on a  
hurling or Gaelic football match, the only time  
the dining-room wireless was ever turned on.  
When it was over Mr. Sheehy and Mrs. Len-  
ehan went to the kitchen.

"Would you like to come for a walk,  
Ariadne?"

She did not reply at once. He gazed through  
the gloom, hoping for the gleam of her smile.  
From the dining room came the faint sound  
of the commentator's rapid, excited voice.  
Ariadne didn't smile. She said: "This minute,  
Mr. Prenderville?"

"If you are doing nothing better."

"I will put on my coat."

He thought of her mother and Mr. Sheehy as  
he waited. He didn't know which direction the  
McKee Barracks and the Civic Guards' Depot  
lay in, but wherever these places were he didn't  
want even to see them in the distance.

"I'm ready," Ariadne said, having delayed for  
no longer than a minute. Barney opened the  
front door softly and softly closed it behind  
them. Damp autumn leaves lay thickly on the  
pavements, blown into mounds and heaps.  
When the wind gusted, more slipped from the  
branches above them and gently descended.  
Ariadne's coat was another shade of mauve,  
matching her scarf. There'd been no need to  
leave the house in that secret way, but they had  
done so nonetheless, without exchanging a  
look.

"I love Sunday," Ariadne said.

He said he liked the day also. He told her  
about Sundays at Lisscree because he didn't  
know how else to interest her. His father and he  
would sit reading in the drawing room on a win-  
ter's afternoon, or in the garden in the summer.  
Nuala would bring them tea and a cake made  
the day before. His father read books that were  
sent to him by post from a lending library in  
Dublin, novels by A. E. W. Mason and E. Phil-  
lips Oppenheim and "Sapper." Once, laying  
one down when he had finished it, he changed  
his mind and handed it to Barney. "Try this,"  
he said, and after that they shared the books  
that came by post. Barney was fourteen or fif-  
teen then.

"Your mother is not there, Mr. Pren-  
derville?"

"My mother died."

He described Lisscree to her: the long, nar-  
row rooms of the house, the garden where Char-  
lie Redmond had worked for as long as Barney  
could remember, the patients in the hall. He  
mentioned the cottages next to Lisscree House  
and Walsh's public house and the ruined tower  
he could see from his bedroom window. He re-

peated a piece of Charlie Redmond's doggerel and described his prematurely wizened features and Nuala's countrywoman's looks. He told Ariadne about school at Ballinadra, the journey on the milk cart when he was small, the return by the bread van in the afternoon, and then the inheriting of his father's old Rudge bicycle. She'd never known a town like Ballinadra, Ariadne said; she only knew Dublin.

"It isn't much," he said, but she wanted to know, and he tried to make a picture of the place for her: the single street and the square, O'Kevin's hardware, the grocers' shops that were bars as well, the statue to the men of '98.

"A quiet place," Ariadne said.

"Oh, a grave."

She nodded solemnly. She could see the house, she said. She knew what he meant by Virginia creeper. She could see his father clearly.

"What would you have done if I hadn't suggested a walk?"

"Stayed in my room."

"Doing nothing, Ariadne?" He spoke lightly, almost teasing her. But she was still solemn and did not smile. Maybe tidying her drawers, she said. She called him Mr. Prenderville again, and he asked her not to. "My name's Barney."

"Just Barney?"

"Barney Gregory."

Again she nodded.

They walked in silence. He said: "Will you always help your mother in the house?"

"What else would I do?"

He didn't know. He wanted to suggest some work that was worthy of her, something better than carrying trays of food to the dining room and sweeping the stair carpet. Even work in a shop was more dignified than what she did, but he did not mention a shop. "Perhaps a nurse."

"I would be frightened to be a nurse. I'd be no good at it."

"I'm sure you would, Ariadne."

She would care tenderly. Her gentleness would be a blessing. Her beauty would cheer the melancholy of the ill.

"Nuns are better at all that," she said.

"Did you go to a convent, Ariadne?"

She nodded, and for a moment seemed lost in the memory the question inspired. When she spoke again her voice, for the first time, was eager. "Will we walk to the convent, Barney? It isn't far away."

"If you would like to."

"We have to turn right when we come to Prussia Street."

No one was about. The front doors of the houses they walked by were tightly closed against the world. Their footsteps were deadened by the sodden leaves.

"I like that color you wear," he said.

"An aunt left me her clothes."

"An aunt?"

"A great-aunt, Aunt Loretta. Had a dress she never wore. She loved this color."

"It suits you."

"She used to say that."

That was why her dresses, and the ones she wore now, were rather long for her. Had the clothes that gave her her old-fashioned look been she no clothes of her own? he wondered. He did not ask.

The convent was a cement building with ver-colored railings in front of it. The windows were drawn down in several of its wings. The curtains ensured privacy in the other wings. A letter box and knocker gleamed on a door.

"Did you walk here every morning?" he asked.

"When I was small my father used to take me. It wasn't out of his way."

She went on talking about that. She had formed a picture of her childhood, just a few moments ago, she had of his. He saw it in her hand with her father, hurrying through the early morning streets. Her father had been in Maguire's coal office in Easter Street. Sometimes they'd stop at a shop for his tobacco. He had an ounce of Digger.

When they crossed the street he wanted to take her arm, but he didn't have the chance. They could walk to a bus stop, he suggested. They could wait for a bus to O'Connell Street. They could have tea somewhere, one of the cinemas that were open on a Sunday. But she would not. She'd have to be getting back.

They turned and walked the way they had come, past the silent houses. The conversation began. They didn't say much.

"God, there's talent for you!" he exclaimed in the Crystal Ballroom, where the girls who stood against the walls. He conveyed a willowy woman of uncertain age to the dance floor, from which, a few minutes later, they disappeared and did not return. Some of the girls who were standing by glanced back at Medlicott, clearly conscious of him handsome. He approached a lean girl with hair the color of newly polished brass. He was not at all pretty, Barney considered.

Because he had no knowledge of dancing, the partners Barney chose usually changed themselves after a minute or two. "Where are you in?" a plump one, more tolerant than the others, inquired. He said he worked as a cleaner's, Slovinski having warned him not to mention being a student, in case the girl was in a fright. "You can't dance," the plump



and commenced to teach him.  
At the end of the evening came she was  
going so. Medlicott had remained attached  
to a lean-faced girl, whom he confidently  
thought he had "got going." Outside the dance  
they heard him complimenting her on  
her dress, and Barney felt embarrassed because  
he wanted to have to tell the plump girl that  
she had lovely eyes, which wouldn't have  
been true. Instead, he asked her her name.  
"Mavis," she said.

Medlicott suggested that they should go out  
by taxi, since the city bars were  
closed now. There were fields in Goatstown,  
and he showed his companions: after they'd had a  
few of nightcaps they could go for a walk  
in the fields in the moonlight. But Mavis

her father would  
not let her if she got in  
the car. He took Bar-  
ney. Her father  
was a forceful, temper-  
ed, and confident.

The lean-faced girl  
wanted to make the  
trip to Goatstown,  
so Medlicott led  
her to an alleyway.  
He kissed her and  
went in a doorway.  
Mavis and Bar-  
ney went some distance.  
When her father  
found out, Mavis said,  
"I could hold  
my own." "All right," Bar-  
ney heard the lean-  
faced girl say.

At the Ford car  
parked at the far  
end of the alleyway  
was a skip full of  
rubble. Medli-  
cott and his companion  
threw it, she took  
on gold-colored  
heels. Medlicott

opened one of the back doors. "Come on in  
my darling," he invited.  
It is difficult to know what to say to Mavis,  
they didn't say anything. She talked about  
her brothers and sisters; half-listening, he imag-  
ined Ariadne at Lisscrea. He imagined being  
kind to her, and introducing her to Nuala in  
the garden and Charlie Redmond in the gar-  
den. He saw himself walking along the road  
and waiting while she attended mass in  
the nearby church. He showed her Ballinadra—  
the elementary shops, the statue to the men of  
the square.

He glanced at the car and caught a glimpse of  
brassy hair through the back window. He would  
introduce her to the tenderhearted Miss Bone.  
He imagined Miss Bone dismounting from her  
bicycle outside O'Kevin's hardware. "Welcome  
to Ballinadra, Ariadne," she murmured in her  
gentle voice.

Three men had turned into the alleyway and  
a moment later shouting began. A door of the  
car was wrenched open; clothing was seized and  
flung out. One of the lean girl's gold-colored  
shoes bounced over the surface of the alleyway,  
coming to rest near the skip. "Get that hooer  
out of my car," a voice furiously commanded.

In spite of what was happening, Barney  
couldn't properly detach himself from his  
thoughts. He walked with Ariadne from the



town to Lisscrea House. On the way he showed  
her the Lackens' farm and the hay shed where  
the Black and Tans had murdered a father and a  
son, and the ramshackle house at the end of a  
long avenue, where the bread van used to call  
every day when he got a lift in it back from  
school, where mad Mrs. Joyce lived. Weeds  
flowered on the verges; it must have been  
summer.

"Get out of that bloody car!"

The garments that lay on the ground were  
pitched into the skip with the shoe. Medlicott  
called out incomprehensibly, a humorous obser-

vation by the sound of it. "D'you want your neck broken?" the same man shouted back at him. "Get out of my property."

"I'm off," Mavis said, and Barney walked with her to her bus stop, not properly listening while she told him that a girl who would enter a motorcar as easily as that would come to an unsavory end. "I'll look out for you in the Crystal," she promised before they parted.

On the journey back to Gogarty Street, Barney was accompanied by an impression, as from a fantasy, of Mavis's plump body, breasts pressed against his chest, a knee touching one of his, the warm perspiration of her palm. Such physical intimacy was not the kind he had ever associated with Ariadne, but as he approached his lodgings he knew he could not let the night pass without the greater reality of seeing her face, without—even for an instant—being again in her company.

When he arrived at Mrs. Lenehan's house he continued to ascend the stairs after he'd reached the landing off which his room lay. Any moment a light might come on, he thought; any moment he would stand exposed and have to pretend he had made a mistake. But the darkness continued, and he switched on no lights himself. Softly, he turned the handle of the door above his, and closed it, standing with his back to the panels. He could see nothing, but so close did the unspoken relationship feel that he half-expected to hear his name whispered. That did not happen; he could not hear even the sound of breathing. He remained where he stood, prepared to do so for however many hours might pass before streaks of light showed on either side of the window blinds. He gazed at where he knew the bed must be, confirmed in this conjecture by the creeping twilight. He waited, with all the passion he possessed pressed into a longing to glimpse the features he had come to love. He would go at once then. One day, in some happy future, he would tell Ariadne of this night of adoration.

But as the room took form—the wardrobe, the bed, the washstand, the chest of drawers—he sensed, even before he could discern more than these outlines, that he was alone. No sleeping face rewarded his patience, no dark hair lay on the pillow. The window blinds were not drawn down. The bed was orderly and covered. The room was tidy, as though abandoned.

**B**efore the arrival of Professor Makepeace-Green the following morning, the episode in the alleyway and Slovinski's swift spiriting away of the willowy woman from the dance-hall floor were retailed. Barney was commiserated with because he had failed to take his chances. Rouge

Medlicott and Slovinski and several other servicemen gave him advice as to amorous advancement in the future. His preoccupied mind went unnoticed.

That evening, it was the old woman who found him. When he remarked upon Ariadne's absence in the dining room, she said their needs in this respect would be attended to by a maid called Biddy whom Mrs. Lenehan was in the process of employing. When he asked where Ariadne had gone she said that Ariadne had always been religious.

"Religious?"

"Ariadne's working in the kitchen of the convent."

Mr. Sheehy came into the dining room and removed his navy blue overcoat and his gloves. A few minutes later Mrs. Lenehan placed the plates of fried food in front of the lodgers and then returned with the metal pot. Mr. Sheehy spoke of the houses he had visited during the day, in his capacity as agent for the Hibernian Insurance Company. Mrs. Lenehan put her mother's bottle of stout to warm the fender.

"Is Ariadne not going to live here anymore?" Barney asked Mrs. Fennerty when Mr. Sheehy and Mrs. Lenehan had gone out for their walk to the McKee Barracks.

"I'd say she'll remain in the convent," Mrs. Fennerty said. "Ariadne always liked that convent."

"I know."

Mrs. Fennerty lit her evening cigarette. "As far as I was to be expected, she said. It was no surprise."

"That she should go there?"

"After you took Ariadne out, Barney. I don't know what I mean?"

He said he didn't. She nodded, her thoughts agreeing with what she had already stated. She poured her stout. She had never called him Barney before.

"It's called going out, Barney. Even if it's nothing very much."

"Yes, but what's that to do with her working in the convent?"

"She didn't tell you about Lenehan? She didn't mention her father, Barney?"

"Yes, she did."

"She didn't tell you he took his life?" The woman crossed herself, her gesture as swift as always was when she made it. She continued to pour her stout, expertly draining it down the side of the glass.

"No, she didn't tell me that."

"When Ariadne was ten years old her father took his life in an upstairs room."

"Why did he do that, Mrs. Fennerty?"

"He was not a man I ever liked." Again she paused, as though to dwell privately upon



on to her late son-in-law. "Shame is the Ariadne lives in."

"Can you remember when you were ten, Barney?"

Barney nodded. It was something they had in common, he'd said to Ariadne, that for both of them a parent had died.

"Every child had affection for a father, Mrs. Fennerty was saying.

"Why did Mr. Lenehan take his life?"

Mrs. Fennerty did not reply. She sipped her tea. She stared into the glow of the fire, then she pushed her cigarette end into it. She said Mr. Lenehan had feared arrest.

"Arrest?" Barney repeated, stupidly. "There was an incident on a tram." Again the old woman blessed herself. Her jauntiness left her. She repeated what she'd told him the first evening he sat with her: that her daughter was a fool where men were concerned. "At that time people looked at Ariadne on the tram. When the girls at the convent shunned the nuns were nice to her. She's never forgotten that."

"What kind of an incident, Mrs. Fennerty?"

"A child on a tram. They have expressions of that kind of thing. I don't even like to know about it."

Barney felt cold, even though he was close to the fire. It was as though he had been told not of the death of Ariadne's father but of her own. He remembered he had taken her arm when they went on their walk. He wished she'd said yes when he suggested they should have tea in a cinema. Not so long ago he hadn't even known she was married, yet now he couldn't imagine not loving her.

"It would have been no good, Barney."

Barney asked her what she meant, but she didn't answer. He knew anyway. It would have been no good because what seemed like a marvel of gentleness in Ariadne was damage wrought by time. She had sensed his love, and fear had followed, possibly revulsion. She would have hated him if he'd taken her arm, even if he'd danced with her, as he had with Mavis.

"Ariadne'll stay there always now," the old woman said, sipping more of her stout. Delicately, she wiped a smear of foam from her lips. "It was as a silver lining that there'd been the convent kitchen to go to, that the same nuns were there to be good to her.

"She would still be here if I hadn't taken her room."

"You were the first young man, Barney. You couldn't be held to blame."

When Barney returned to Dublin from Lissabon at the beginning of his second term he

found, unexpectedly, that he had been allocated college rooms. He explained that in Gogarty Street, and Mrs. Lenehan said it couldn't be helped. "Mr. Sheehy and myself are getting married," she added in the hall.

Barney said he was glad, which was not untrue. Mr. Sheehy had been drawn toward a woman's property; for her part, Mrs. Lenehan needed more than a man could offer her on walks to the McKee Barracks. Mrs. Lenehan had survived the past; she had not been damaged; second time round, she had settled for Mr. Sheehy.

In the dining room he said good-bye to Mrs. Fennerty. There was a new young clerk in Ned Sheehy's office who was looking for digs, she said. He would take the vacant room; it wouldn't be empty for long. A student called Browder had moved into Ariadne's a week or so after her going. It hadn't been empty for long either.

It was snowing that evening. Huge flakes clung to Barney's overcoat as he walked to the convent, alone in the silence of the streets. Since Ariadne's going he had endlessly loitered by the convent, but its windows were always blank, as they were on that Sunday afternoon. Tonight, a dim light burned above the green side door, but no curtain twitched as he scanned the gray facade, no footsteps disturbed the white expanse beyond the railings. In the depths of the ugly building were the strangeness and the beauty as he had known them, and for a moment he experienced what was left of his passion: a useless longing to change the circumstances there had been.

While he was still in Mrs. Lenehan's house he had thought that somehow he might rescue Ariadne. It was a romantic urge, potent before love began to turn into regret. He had imagined himself ringing the convent bell and again seeing Ariadne's face. He had imagined himself smiling at her with all the gentleness he possessed, and walking again with her; and persuading her, when time had passed, that love was possible. "You'll get over her," his father had said during the holidays, guessing only that there had been some girl.

A bus creeps through the snow: years later, for Barney, there is that image, a fragment in the cluster that makes the whole. It belongs with the upturned butter box in the grass and the pinks in the brindle hair of the dog, with Rouge Medlicott and Slovinski, and the jockey-capped porters, and the blue-faced dining-hall clock. A lone figure stares out into the blurred night, hating the good sense that draws him away from loitering gloomily outside a convent.

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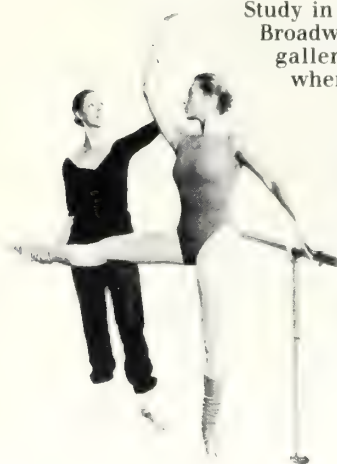
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# GONE BLIND

Diary of a lost weekend

By Otto Friedrich



May 28, 1988,  
Saturday, 10 A.M.

I am blind. I have the two black eye patches, and I am supposed to be motionless (or as near-motionless as possible) for the next four days and four nights. In theory, that will drain all the blood from the right eye and the right eye will heal itself. But if the theory doesn't work... Well, the doctor says I'll just have to

wait for five or six months to see if the right eye can heal itself. Otherwise, surgery...

The immediate question is, What should I do with one eye while sitting upright in an easy chair for four days and four nights? Of the things I normally do can't I do. Can't read, can't write, can't play the piano, can't work in the garden, can't even watch TV. It's a frightening prospect. Passing the time: "Tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos dans une chambre." That's me, the happy man who does not know how to remain at rest in a room.

Molly, the super-agent, thinks I

should take notes on everything that happens—or rather she doesn't think I should but thinks I will. Doesn't seem like a very good idea. What can possibly happen? No great perceptions or revelations likely, just boredom. And taking notes isn't allowed either. Maybe just complain into a tape recorder every few hours? Molly herself is off to the booksellers' convention in Anaheim—like almost everybody else in the publishing business—partly to make deals, partly just to show the flag.

Actually, I've always thought an eye patch looks rather rakish.

"Don't you think I look like Wotan?" I ask Priscilla.

"No, you do not look like Wotan," says Priscilla. The relentlessly realistic wife. "Besides, he was terrible, a thief, a liar."

"The king of the gods," I say, "lord

of Valhalla. All I need now is a long wooden spear."

One eye patch may be rakish, but two are quite different. Two change me from a wounded warlord into a blind man, thus helpless, thus pitiable, even (secretly) contemptible. Of course, I don't have any idea what I look like with both eyes blindfolded. It's the *idea* of being helpless that makes me feel suddenly an invalid, unmanned, and makes me think that everybody else regards

me that way. I know perfectly well that nobody really despises me for being unable to see, but I still don't want anybody to find me in this condition.

Saturday, noon

How little I know about exactly where things are in the house that I have lived in for twenty-five years. And how easy it is to get lost. And when I'm lost—maybe only a few feet from where I think I ought to be—how hard it is to recognize anything. What is this sharp corner in this wall? Which door is this?

I very soon learn that just about every mistake leads to some kind of punishment, to barked shins or a lampshade hitting you in the face. So you slow down, just creeping along in what you used to think were familiar surroundings. And so you get scared, not really scared but anxious, wary.

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And so the big easy chair, which first seemed like a prison, soon becomes a sort of sanctuary. I sit here.

But what am I supposed to do with myself? When the eye first opened, blind, in France, I thought that lying might be dangerous to the eye, so I tried just sitting quietly and thinking. Total failure. I'm not even it's even possible to just sit and do nothing. Virginia Woolf tried to describe a philosopher at work with the idea of Mr. Ramsay laboring through a alphabet of ideas—now he has reached J, now he has started on K. I have believed one word of it. With the least, thinking soon becomes dreaming, and after an hour of it I desperately want to "do something." Or do I just feel guilty about doing nothing? Sitting on the sofa in France, I tried reciting poems from my head, but I haven't got many poems there. The only one I could remember all the way through was "The Wocky."

Well, I knew this was going to happen, so I made a few plans. I purchased my yellow easy chair in the living room next to a radio that plays records and tape cassette. Then I set the radio at 1560, W. It's remarkable how much you can plan ahead for four days of business—where to put things so that you can find them without seeing them. I chose some record albums and checked to make sure that all the records were in the right order and stacked them next to the machine. I wouldn't be able to deal with a lot of different records, and a record would last only about one of the 100 hours, so I decided on an album of Glenn Gould playing *Well-Tempered Clavier* and another fatter one of Birgit Nilsson singing *Tristan*.

The *pièce de résistance*, though, was Priscilla's tape recording of the complete New Testament. She bought it from some churchwoman several years ago to play in the car during trips to New England, but I suspect that there are long stretches that have never been heard. How many times have I determined to read the New Testament—one of those eternally unachieved cultural duties

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one's way through *The Divine* or *Don Quixote*—and how times have I fallen by the way—mewhere in the middle of *Mat* Mark? Now, by God, I only sit comatose in my chair, and orders of technology will carry ward through Ephesians, Phi- is, and Colossians—all the way elation. All narrated on twelve in the mellifluous tones of Alex- scourby, whoever he may be. A familiar name. TV documen-

first let's see what WQXR offer. The familiar jollities of ven's Eighth. Well, why not ven's Eighth? When did I last ? A year ago? Two years ago? did I last really listen to it, as ing more than background in the car? Ten years ago? y? The phone rings.

has just heard from someone my eye, and she wants to know details. After a very few de- he starts to tell me about her o the anti-depression clinic at bia Presbyterian. . . . Yes, yes, . The phone is only about ten om my chair, but that's farther he phone line stretches. It was easy to feel my way from my o the sofa, but getting back is . It is possible to get hopelessly thin an area of no more than -five square feet, and to stand middle of what seems a void, ng out in all directions for ung, anything, to tell you where e.

the time I get back to my chair rn on the radio again, the fa- strains of Beethoven's Eighth hanged into the familiar strains e fourth Brandenburg. Does R believe in playing only music ou already know? And does it e only in cheerful music? When last play something strange and Like, say, *Moses und Aron*?

w it's time for the cheerful news. ent Reagan is in Helsinki to ire" for tomorrow's summit con- e in Moscow with Mikhail Gor- v. Probably fast asleep. Why do ave summit conferences any- Reagan shouldn't be allowed out White House. Dangerous to let in loose.

Saturday, 5 P.M.

I thought I'd at least get to spend Saturday afternoon listening to some pleasant opera, but what WQXR provides is Gounod's *Faust*, which must be about as dull and saccharine a piece as any searcher for saccharine dullness could possibly find. I don't know what's wrong with all those French opera composers—Massenet, Meyerbeer, Saint-Saëns—nothing wrong, really, they're just dull. But how can I complain about dullness? I'm not sitting here to be inspired, I'm sitting here to kill time. You have to accept whatever happens. "Faut pas penser, faut accepter," Hemingway's Spanish general tells Robert Jordan. Suppose the only choice was sitting here and listening to Gounod's *Faust* or sitting here in darkness and silence?

Take a deep breath and start on the New Testament: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Tamar. . . ." God, is that really the way it begins? Indeed it is. "And Phares begat Earom; and Earom begat Aram; and Aram begat Amina- dab. . . ."

Actually, I'm a little surprised at how well I seem to know Matthew. I, the godless cynic, know all the beatitudes and the parable of the Gadarene swine and the sower and the loaves and fishes. I don't think there's a single paragraph that isn't familiar to me. And the language too. Things like, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." I remember all those passages from having them read to me in school every morning, back in the dark days when such wickednesses were perpetrated in the classroom. And my mother, who was really not the least bit religious, repeatedly quoting things that appealed to her (perhaps from her own school days), like, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." And then there's the Bach St. *Matthew Passion* that is by now completely inside my head. I can hear Peter singing, "Ich kenne des Menschen

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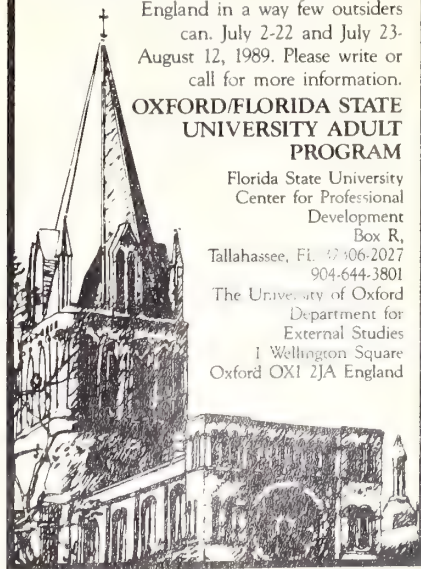
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nicht," or the crowd shrieking "La ihn kreuzigen!" and it seems like a dubbed movie to hear it him be crucified!"

But I wish he wouldn't talk about plucking out your right eye and casting it away. I need my right eye.

The phone rings again. I'm sounds so worried about me I have to reassure her. Nothing here, just a touch of blindness. There is no right way to talk to the sick (or to an invalid (am I an invalid?). If someone sounds concerned, I have to deny any need for concern; they don't sound concerned, I'm hurt and neglected. All *amour* I suppose—or rather, self-precupation. All I can really think about is myself, and that's a condition I don't like being in.

*Sunday, A*

The night is much worse. I day you just sit there and listen to By night, you sit there and try to sleep, but who can fall asleep in a chair? I've never been able to it on an airplane (though Pacific claims that I always end up sleeping an hour or so, somewhere over the land, just before they wake you up to give you coffee).

You start out calmly, relaxed, eyes closed, vowing to think pleasant thoughts until sleep comes. Pleasant thoughts soon turn to thoughts of blindness, thoughts of the difficult thoughts of what to say to someone out in Anaheim if he wants any more revisions on my Glenn Gould book. Then finally comes that nightmare moment when you find that you have fallen asleep, but now you're half awake and trying to get back to sleep again, and you can't. Shifting and turning and finding every position uncomfortable.

I hear the grandfather clock in the hall strike twelve, meaning it's long night ahead. I think I missed hearing it strike one, but I certainly hear two, three, and four. Odd how I've used to looking at my wristwatch at the time and regarding the grandfather clock as an ornament in the background, but now the wristwatch is useless, and I listen for the grandfather clock to measure out my time.

At seven o'clock, after phar

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hours of sleep, I feel just about  
ay I do after an overnight flight  
is—grimy, sticky, depressed,  
asted. The only compensation is  
I'm in Paris, except now I'm not  
ris.

QXR is in some experimental  
l (saving the Beethoven sympho-  
for lunchtime) and has discov-  
something so awful that one can  
listen with morbid fascination.  
erous, turgid, with lots of low  
es—who can have written some-  
so utterly dreadful? Clearly con-  
orary, but by someone who has  
ed or rejected all of modern mu-  
finally decide that it must have  
written by some Hollywood com-  
r, somebody like Max Steiner  
anz Waxman, who spent his life  
ing for the hated movie studios  
nourishing thoughts of symphon-  
venge. The announcer finally in-  
us that this was Symphony No.  
Sir Arnold Bax. Well, live and  
. I wonder whether this Master  
e King's Musick ever wrote any  
scores.

Sunday, 8 A.M.  
hearty voice tells me that Reagan  
rived in Moscow, a bright spring  
flags flying, Gorbachev offering a  
ome in St. George's Hall of the  
lin. WQXR's news is as relent-  
cheery as its music. Flags are al-  
flying in the resonant tones of  
nnouncer, and the name of Ron-  
Reagan always sounds as though  
ere a historic figure. The chief  
loger, father of voodoo econom-  
arms purveyor to Ayatollah Kho-  
i, sponsor of Nicaraguan terror-  
—what must the Russians really  
c of him? Will he be able to stay  
e, or will he fall asleep as he did  
ing that audience with the Pope?  
nd radio news goes so slowly, re-  
ing itself every hour, with just a  
bit of an advance, like a daily  
opera. Now President Reagan  
eached Moscow, and now Presi-  
Reagan has reached Moscow and  
his left foot forward, and now  
ident Reagan has reached Mos-  
and put his left foot forward and  
ched out his right hand. I wonder  
lio isn't designed just to be heard  
ort sequences. Turn it on in the  
nd get a little music and an up-to-

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### NOTES FOR "HEARTS & EMBRACES"

ACROSS: 1. S(T...)URGEON; 5. MOT(IV)E; 8. RUSH-ER; 10. RELATIVE, anagram; 13. SET-AIR-TAP(X)E, reversed; 15. UN-LIT; 17. FRESHMEN, anagram; 18. CHANCELLERIES, anagram; 19. BRAIN-CHILD; 21. CHATTERS, anagram; 22. ANTIGONE, anagram; 24. NO(reversal)-vel; 25. DEPRECIATIONS, anagram; 27. U(N)SHACKLE, anagram; 29. MORGUE, hidden; 30. GR-AS-SHOPPERS; 32. TERMINER, hidden; 33. DULCET, "dull set". DOWN: 2. REPLICATES, anagram; 3. MIGRAINES, anagram; 4. A-PP-RENT-ICES-HIP; 5. GAME S(anagram)—HOW; 6. DIVINELY(ne), anagram; 7. E-VI-(DEN)CE; 8. PRE(A-CH)Y; 9. PROLIFERAT-E, anagram; 10. PRESENT(MON)TS; 11. V...-OIL-UMINOUSLY; 12. S-KETCHES; 14. BAR-RACKS; 16. SHORT-BREAD; 20. CANN(ONE)ERS; 23. SNAP-PIE-ST; 26. R-APTURE, anagram; 28. CAN-ARID; 31. TRANSMUTABLE, anagram.

SOLUTION TO FEBRUARY DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 74). (RICHARD) MITCHELL LESS THAN WORDS CAN SAY. Our industries depend on what we call "brand loyalty," and thoughtful readers will all be brand traitors. They may, even probably will, go the next step and become brand nihilists who decide not to buy any after-shave or hot comb at all.

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the-minute news fix, and then turn it off again. Keep it on any longer, and you find that it's really a kind of turntable, with Reagan going around and around and the Beethoven symphonies playing over and over again.

Time to start on *Tristan*, keeping it not quite loud enough to wake Priscilla. What gorgeous stuff. Well, maybe she'll wake up anyway. Remember that story I read the other night about Chabrier and d'Indy and all the other French musicians trekking to Munich to hear *Tristan* for the first time? While they were sitting in the darkness, waiting for the prelude to begin, they heard this sound of snuffling and choking, and they discovered that it was Chabrier sobbing. Somebody asked him whether he was all right, and Chabrier said between sobs, "I know it's stupid, but I can't help it. I've been waiting for ten years of my life for that A on the 'cellos."

Sunday, 3 P.M.

Nothing is happening. I just sit here and listen to things. Listened to tapes of two interminable Glenn Gould radio shows on Schoenberg. Then back to the gospels.

Strange how Matthew and Mark are so similar and so dissimilar. Matthew goes to such trouble in trying to prove that everything Jesus did was a fulfillment of the prophets' predictions, whereas Mark just wants to tell the story. Priscilla says he is the *Daily News* reporter of his day. Matthew starts with a genealogy of Jesus; Mark starts with John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness.

Sometimes they are almost too similar, as when they both say that John wore camel hair and a leather girdle and lived on locusts and wild honey. Priscilla says both are believed to have relied on the same missing source. But then Mark mysteriously leaves out the whole Sermon on the Mount, which is so central to Matthew. How could the *Daily News* reporter have missed that?

I have to get through three tapes a day to finish this. Four hours a day? Well, we're killing time.

Sunday, 6 P.M.

*Tristan* is a fast-paced thriller compared with the gospels. Isolde has just

given our hero her love potion after only about an hour and a half of singing. "Verräter! Ich trink' sie dir!" Really odd how all of Wagner's main heroines seem to be witches. Isolde, Brünnhilde, Kundry, Ortrud. They're not generally presented as witches, but they always seem to have a private supply of potions and spells and curses. Imagine Cosima complaining, some wintry evening by the Bayreuth fireside, about the great man's stereotypical images of women. "Ach du lieber!" he cries.

Sunday, 8 P.M.

Tonight I had to take off one eye patch for a while to watch Dan Rather broadcasting from what he keeps calling "inside the Kremlin," which consists of him standing in front of St. Basil's instead of sitting at his desk. The CBS version of this summit is just about as mindless as the WQXR radio version. It is alleged that Gorbachev "needs" some kind of blessing from Reagan for some kind of domestic political reasons, while Reagan is allegedly thinking earnestly about "his place in history." It seems reasonable to predict that Reagan's place in history will be somewhere between a blip and a footnote, perhaps about that of Harding. As for what's going on in the real world, TV shows us none of that, just Rather and the official platitudes and that tense smile.

But Molly calls late from Anaheim to report that she has an offer of \$1.5 million for two novels by one of her star authors. And that she turned it down. Think of it, a daughter of mine rejecting \$1.5 million. And this is a writer whom Priscilla discovered in the local public library and urged Molly to pursue. "I told them I'd be willing to accept \$1 million for one book," Molly says.

"And?"

"And I think they'll agree."

Monday, 6:30 A.M.

The second night was even worse than the first. Priscilla said I'd be more comfortable if I had a second chair to put my feet up on, so we shoved another chair up against the first one, and it was indeed more comfortable, so I fell asleep listening to some beautiful WQXR opera that

never learned the name of. The grandfather clock again woke me at midnight (to some purring annoying purring advertisements). I managed to twist around so that I was lying across the two chairs, with my head almost flat against one side—no, comfortable. Then, half-asleep, I suddenly realized that if I was going to lie flat, I might as well be upstairs. The whole point of this damned experiment is to stay upright so that the blood in the eye can settle. So I rolled myself up into a sitting position and was wide-awake. Thinking about lying in bed. Hearing the clock strike one.

And I think that blind people develop other senses, or perhaps they just become more aware of what their other senses can do. Sitting and staring into the darkness, I gradually became aware of a trembling in the air, meaningless shapes that one senses before one's blindfolded eyes. Everything shook up and down just a little bit, and quite inexplicably. I immediately began to imagine that this was something new that was wrong with my eyes. Then I heard from a great distance the sound of some thing approaching, getting louder, and finally passing overhead, whereupon the trembling in front of me gradually died down. Now, what kind of person could "see" the vibrations of an approaching airliner before its engines could be heard?

Monday, 1 A.M.

Now it's officially Memorial Day with predictions of temperatures in the nineties, and WQXR periodically offers us quotations from various statesmen on the worthiness of loyalty for one's country. General George Marshall said it was a noble thing to die for one's country. Which all sounds fine until they try to apply it to Vietnam, or some other war, as they always do. The only honest thing that can be said on this Memorial Day to the families of everyone who died in Vietnam is: Sorry it was all a terrible mistake; your child died for nothing. Actually, that's the best that can be said. All the excuses for Reaganism, which means lies and fraud.

And now WQXR says Reagan is apparently giving some kind of toast and presenting the rulers of the



with a videotape of an old Cooper movie, *Friendly Persuasion* seems to be singing the song of Quaker pacifism, which is a little odd when we're all going to fight to finance Reagan's Pentagon. WQXR is not too clear about what Reagan is trying to say. And the Russians make of such a mess of it?

Monday, 1 P.M.

Something is happening. I keep listening to the New Testament. It's amazing how in the Gospel of John, Jesus finally starts saying the first time that he is God. In the Gospels, he often said that his Father had sent him, but he always called himself the son of man, and Pontius Pilate asked him if he was the king of the Jews, he said, "I sayest it." Only now does he say "I am in the Father, and the Father in me," and "I and my Father are one," and "Before Abraham was, I am."

Monday, 6 P.M.

He keeps calling, and so I have to tell the story of my blindness over and over again, even make some wisecracks. What a bore become! An odd call just now. Dorothy complained because I told her about my problem. The reason I hadn't called is that my husband is very sick. She insists I should have called anyway. But I ask, "So how's Edward?" she says, "Okay, fine," lying through her teeth. Some people want you to tell their problems but don't want to hear about yours, but sometimes the opposite. And as always, there's no right way to talk to the sick.

Tuesday, 6 A.M.

Another awful night, again very deep. I cannot stop thinking of my blindness, particularly at night, in the darkness. For some reason, I'm remembering a trip we took when I was about ten, my father trying to be an American and taking his two young sons up the Mohawk Valley west of Albany to visit his pre-Revolutionary battle site. But what I remember after all these years is that we spent the night

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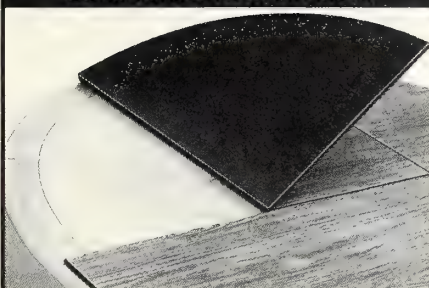


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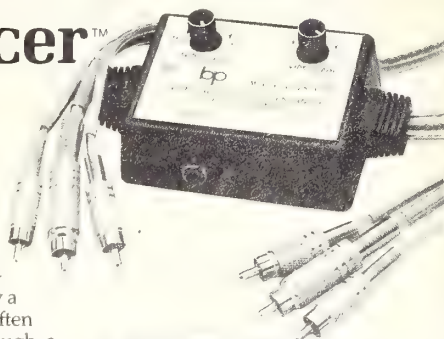
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at some professor's house in Schenectady, and then we all had breakfast together, and the professor's father was blind, and he accidentally knocked over his glass of orange juice. What I remember is that white-haired old man reaching out with his hands and saying, "What's the matter? What have I done?" And the professor's wife, with an irritated look on her face, mopping up the orange juice from the thick white linen tablecloth with a thick white linen napkin and saying, brusquely, "Nothing, Dad, it's perfectly all right." And the white-haired old man, still reaching tentatively outward with wrinkled and freckled brown hands, asking, "What's wrong? What did I do?"

How could I earn a living if I were to go blind? That's the basic question, isn't it? Well, if I couldn't write real books, I suppose I could always turn out potboilers, couldn't I? Whatever it is that Danielle Steel does—is that so hard? Molly says those books are all essentially the same. Girl has wonderful man, girl loses wonderful man, girl becomes rich and powerful but can she ever find happiness? Girl meets wonderful man, either the same or a copy of the lost one, but can he really replace the lost one? Remember Ewald's rule that the two main males have to have different hair color, so everybody can tell them apart, and the one who seems to be bad is really good and vice versa. And somebody's rule that all thrillers involve trying to get either into or out of an impregnable place. And that there comes a point when the hero says to the heroine either "they must not know that we suspect" or "they must not suspect that we know."

God! Imagine dictating such stuff to some suburban stenographer.

Now it's six o'clock, and WQXR predicts another day in the nineties.

*Tuesday, 11 A.M.*

This is the last day, so let's just be patient. Accept, accept. Accept WQXR playing Beethoven's Ninth not once but twice. And accept Reagan tottering around in Moscow. At least, he's signing that missile treaty, which can't do any harm.

The really fascinating element in Acts and the epistles of St. Paul is

how incredibly important it was to start preaching to the Gentiles. That one decision was what changed Christianity from a dissident Jewish cult into a world religion, and it was an essentially political decision, a strategy for conquering the world. It's all put very poetically in Acts, to the effect that Peter preached to both Jews and Gentiles and "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Not clear exactly what happens when the Holy Ghost falls on you, but that was enough to justify Peter's strategy. No wonder he's regarded as the first pope.

But Paul does most of the rationalizing. I'd always thought that his doctrine of salvation through faith was something he'd arrived at philosophically, but it was mainly a way of telling the Gentiles that they didn't have to be circumcised or follow Jewish dietary laws. And what jesuitic arguments he used. He claims that the Jewish laws are just a temporary measure to keep sinners under control, but now "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." He even claims that God's promises to the "seed" of Abraham don't apply to the Jews because the seed of Abraham is really Jesus, and therefore the promises apply to everyone who believes in Jesus. And it all worked, the arguments worked, the strategy worked.

*Tuesday, 8 P.M.*

Isolde has finally got her wish and died, in a state of what she calls "*höchste Lust*." Right on, Isolde. Great stuff.

Molly called from Anaheim to say that she thinks she's got her million.

I accidentally uncovered the blind eye for about two seconds at dinner-time and saw no sign of anything, meaning that this whole damn experiment probably isn't going to work. One keeps hoping, but one keeps telling oneself not to hope. What's that line by William of Orange—"It is not necessary to hope in order to persevere."

I don't think I've actually *thought* one single thing during these four awful days. Pascal was right. Does anyone really think anymore, or do we all just sit here taking in information and then spewing forth bits and pieces

of it on demand?

Am I more inclined to think do some mindless work, like mow the lawn? I doubt it. I just daydream. Then why do ideas often come when I'm shaving?

*Wednesday*

I dimly remember waking up in the middle of the night and feeling I just had to lie down, which I was supposed to do, that lying down was more important than anything else in the world. So I woke up just now and found myself lying flat on my back on the floor. Got back into the chair and now can't sleep. And I still have to go to Paris.

Now it's dawn, and there's no light in keeping these eye patches on. Dawn light is just a gray film.

#### March Index Sources

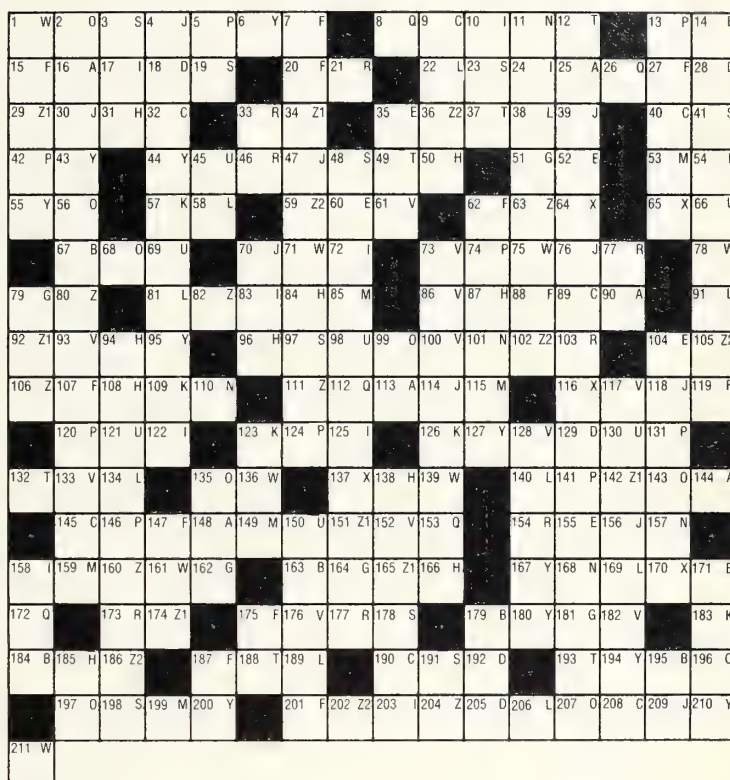
1,2 U.S. Federal Reserve Board; 3 Burnham Lambert (N.Y.C.); 4,5 Stanley Capital International Pe (N.Y.C.); 6 Barry Blechman, Lora (N.Y.C.); 7,8 Center for Defense Information (Washington); 9 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; 10 Agency for International Development; 11 National Institute of Tourism (Montreal); 12 U.S. Embassy (Savador); 13 National Safe Kids Campaign (Washington); 14 Hippocrates Poll (Princeton); 15 World Health Organisation (Geneva); 16 National Federation (Washington); 17 Centers for Disease Control (Atlanta); 18 U.S. Congressional Office of Technology Assessment; 19 Market (Washington); 20 National Pest Association (Dunn Loring, Va.); 21 N.Y.C. Transit Authority; 22 Riddle (N.Y.C.); 23 U.S. Federal Highway Administration; 24 Roman Empire B.C.-A.D. 476: A Study in Survival (Chester G. Starr, Oxford University Press (N.Y.C.)); 25 Michael R. Worldwatch (Washington); 26 Labor Industries (Tel Aviv); 27 Des Moines Iowa Poll; 28 Snack Food Manufacturers (Duluth, Minn.); 29 Roper Organization (N.Y.C.); 30 Malcolm Willits (Hollywood); 31 Frederick's of Hollywood; 32 Dodgertown Sports and Conference Center (Vero Beach, Fla.); 33 Ad Network (Vancouver, Canada); 34 Institute (Alexandria, Va.); 35 American Dental Hygienists' Association (Chicago); 36 Winners, Ltd. (Tokyo); 37 Paul Schnur, Mayo Clinic (Scottsdale, Ariz.); 38 Dieter's Guide to Weighing In During Sex, by Richard Smith, Wiley Publishing (N.Y.C.); 39 Hershey's Kisses, USA (Hershey, Pa.).



# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 75

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each tells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest clues and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 77.



## CLUES

## WORDS

Ideals or goals to which one is dedicated

16 25 113 144 148  
90

Chicken, lily-livered

67 14 195 179 184  
163

Useful buttonlike ornament on a Japanese man's sash

32 9 208 190 40  
89 145

Jibe, censure sarcastically

192 28 129 18 205

Eng. philosopher (1588-1679; *Leviathan*)

60 155 104 35 171 52

Occurring in conversation

201 187 147 119 15 88 54 107  
27 62 20 175 7

Reserved, reticent

51 162 164 79 181

Two components of a garment fastening (3 wds.)

108 31 138 166 87 94 96 84  
50 185

Powerful, serviceable, actual

17 203 24 125 158 122 83 10  
72

Unrestrained, excessive

209 76 156 114 39 30 118 70  
47 4

Paired, coupled

126 57 123 109 183

Horseman

38 81 206 134 58 189 169 22  
91 140

Present but not apparent

53 159 85 115 149 199

Bout, hot contest (hyph.)

110 11 157 101 168

Agalloch

2 207 56 196 99 197 68 135  
143

P. One who fears or hates foreigners

146 131 5 74 13 124 42 120  
141

Q. Carries

26 112 172 153 8

R. Beneath one, unworthy (2 wds.)

173 46 21 154 177 103 33 77

S. Mournful, melancholy

41 178 48 198 23 19 191 3  
97

T. Faints

49 193 188 132 12 37

U. Doctor in title of a Christopher Marlowe play

66 45 121 150 130 69 98

V. Arrogant, presumptuous

93 152 182 100 86 176 61 128  
117 133 73

W. Brutal bullies

71 139 78 136 75 161 211 1

X. Disney character originally called Dippy Dawg

170 64 65 116 137

Y. At a distance but within sight; likely to happen (3 wds.)

127 55 6 200 194 210 44 167  
180 43 95

Z. Fleeing, out of control

80 82 160 204 63 106 111

Z1. Broods; scatters about; stretchers

92 151 29 174 142 165 34

Z2. Legislative body

186 102 202 36 59 105

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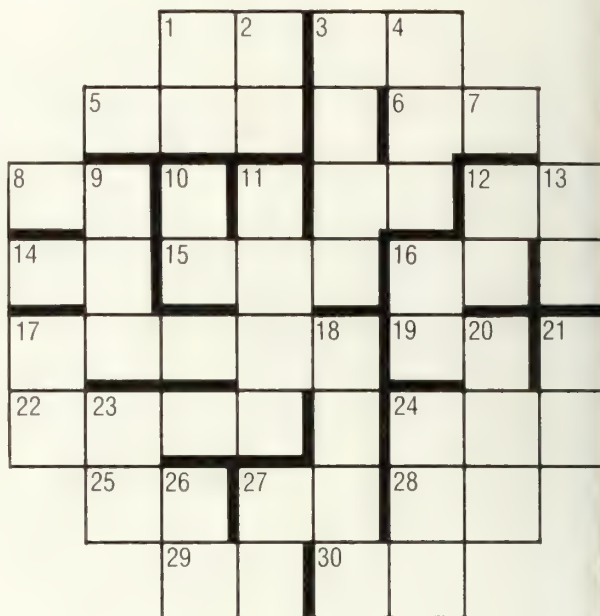
# PUZZLE

## Short Form

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

**C**lue answers are not entered in the normal fashion.

Five proper names are among the answers. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 77.



### Across

1. Former Met manager rejects agreement with athletic club (5)
3. Procure for the ninth namesake of an English queen? (5)
5. Mideast title that could be construed to define taking in female (7)
6. Quiet—awful quiet—card game (6)
8. Indulgence for onetime luck of the Irish? (6)
10. Line prompt heard (5)
11. Spring infuses the man at Eastertide (7)
12. Uncap Tokay and mix for the ultimate punch? (4)
14. Decline of the French centime beginning to affect yen (5)
15. Flower like a farmworker? (5)
16. Gracious, Buick's front engine doesn't start turning over (6)
17. Rewrite piece, deny concealing an unknown is opportunism (10)
19. Mug of beer for prior (6)
22. Church title given by top Latin encyclopedia (10)
24. The heartless former first lady's temporary living quarters (7)
25. A large number minus one thousand equals one or more (3)
27. Short dance skirt said to be exceeding good taste (6, *hyphenated*)

28. Lover of Elizabeth marginally eschews intercourse (5)
29. Some pasta, partially sanitized, returned (4)
30. Cold and bitchy, ignoring odd characters (3)

### Down

1. Beat consuming urge for pepper (7)
2. Run down spy with backing of Scotland Yard (5)
3. Flower raised from phenomenal cutting (7)
4. Excellent axe tip is broken—make amends (7)
7. A bit of coral. . . Yes! (3)
9. Cease exercising without phys ed—he's gotten away (7)
10. Doll I keep confused about wife (6)
11. Item in encyclical covers cardinal's title (8)
12. Movie about the heart of Isaac Newton is a dog (6)
13. English self-esteem turns kind of arch (4)
16. Famous oceanographer shot, one hears (5)
17. The Common Market's taking in ten administrators shortly (5)
18. Agree with religious authority: energy—besides love, energy—dated you (11, *four words*)
20. Mysterious force is surrounding Poles debating art (9)
21. Divine sort of Reese's Pieces (7)
23. Terry, the actor, displays some excellence (5)
24. State Department's last seen doubly distressed (9)
26. Insane asylum inmate readily taken advantage of (4)
27. Everyone in music is brought up Italian. Shame! (5)

**Contest Rules:** Send completed diagram with name and address to "Short Form," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the May issue. Winners of the January puzzle, "One in Three," are Edward I. Sands, Beverly Hills, California; Frederick Knoerzer, New York, New York; and Dorothy M. Jenk, Memphis, Tennessee.



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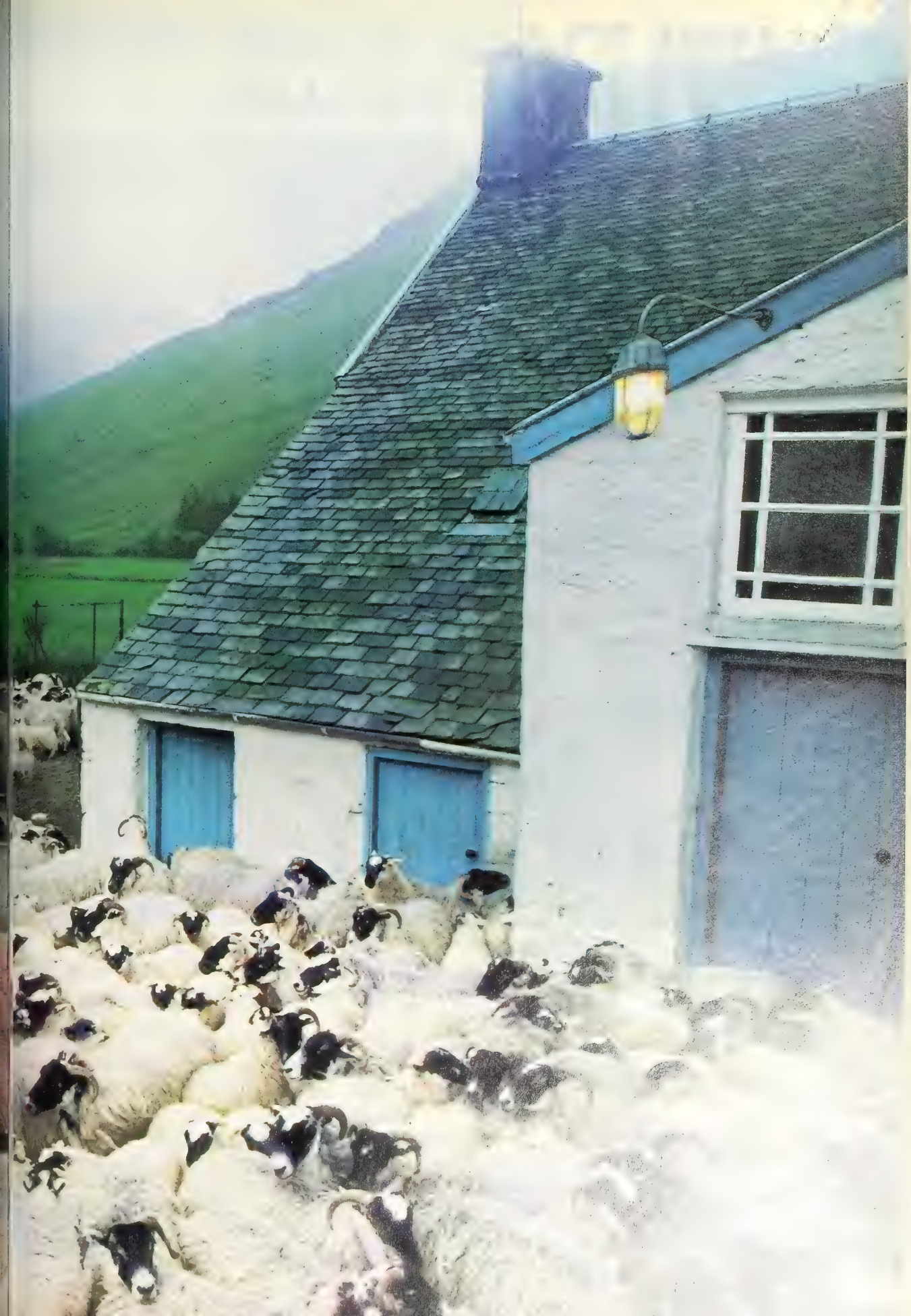
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# LETTERS

## Bones of Contention

Douglas J. Preston ["Skeletons in Our Museums' Closets," February] offers a generally fair-minded analysis of the exceedingly difficult problem of reburial of Native American remains held by American museums. Yet the museums' and Indians' positions in the dispute are probably not as firmly drawn as his article suggests. Certainly the position of the Smithsonian Institution is still evolving, both as we consider repatriation case by case and as we meet with Indian spokespersons and confront the depth of their feelings on the matter.

Known descendants, under both law and elementary morality, have the prerogative of reclaiming and re-burying their ancestors' remains. Although the attempt to establish the link of descent often requires patient work with old, ambiguous documents, the right of reburial is clear. The Smithsonian Institution currently operates on this principle. We have tentatively identified the remains of thirteen Indians and contacted their tribal leadership.

In cases in which identification is uncertain, a balance may have to be struck. Tribal affiliation may be almost certain, for example, even though there are no clues to individual identity. Working first on the best-known cases, we have not yet had to confront this problem. But where we can establish a highly probable link of descent, repatriation is probably the only rea-

sonable course of action.

The real problems of identification, which apply to the vast majority of skeletal remains in museum collections, only begin at this juncture. In most areas of the country, proof of continuity of residence was rare. The advancing frontier of white settlement not only displaced adjacent groups but caused secondary and tertiary displacements. In addition, the toll of Old World diseases such as smallpox and measles led to catastrophic and amalgamation among Indian communities, well beyond the limits of historical documentation. What reliability can a link of descent be established under these circumstances? And how much more difficult will it be as we go back centuries but millennia—into an almost entirely archaeological record?

Karen Funk, a legislative analyst at the law firm retained by the Oglala Sioux, is quoted as saying that the Smithsonian Institution asked the Oglala "to prove that it, the museum, doesn't own those remains." This misrepresents our attempt to work with the Oglala. In fact, the Smithsonian wrote to the Oglala tribal council stating that despite the age and perhaps incomplete nature of the early records, we had identified the remains of three tribal members. The museum sought the council's assistance in contacting any known descendants, so that we could work with them to determine the proper disposition of the remains."

Our records are open to Oglala representatives. We are eager to establish that these (and perhaps other) remains are, in fact, those of the Oglala Sioux. But the territory occupied by the Sioux changed greatly between the eighteenth and nineteenth cen-

*Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.*



s. To what surviving group par-  
ar remains should be returned  
nds on the accuracy with which  
remains can be dated, on the ac-  
panying artifacts, and on the ade-  
y with which historical records  
v us to establish tribal hunting  
ories. Since many of these mat-  
go well beyond current scholar-  
and existing documentation,  
pects for unambiguous identifica-  
would be greatly enhanced by a  
inely collaborative effort involv-  
Oglala representatives and our  
specialists.

short, rather than ask descen-  
s to "prove" anything, the  
hsonian has *sought* the aid of trib-  
representatives in the hope of speed-  
he identification of remains. This  
-consuming effort of proper iden-  
tation is of great importance to  
l groups who want to be assured  
the remains of their ancestors are  
commingled with the remains of  
bers of hostile tribes.

othing less than the same degree  
ncern and care is required of us by  
public trust. What has been ded-  
ed in the Smithsonian are na-  
l collections, whose scientific  
rtance Preston rightly empha-  
Are they to be returned to any-  
who makes a claim on them (and  
irretrievably lost to science) irre-  
ive of whether the claim of de-  
has any validity?

ne Smithsonian Institution deep-  
pects the right of descendants to  
im the remains of their ancestors  
deeply regrets the circumstances  
nich too many of those remains  
first acquired. Beginning with  
cases and working toward more  
ult ones, we are seeking to estab-  
analytical and ethical principles  
will cohere into a consistent re-  
ation policy. Such a policy must  
nsistive both to the role that liv-  
raditions of ancestral continuity  
in contemporary Indian com-  
ities and also to the part that  
ce plays in deepening our under-  
ling of the whole aboriginal past.  
ne intention of Christopher  
e [attorney for the Three Affili-  
Tribes of the Fort Berthold Res-  
ion in North Dakota] to put the  
cal anthropologists "out of busi-  
' is unrealistic and regressive.

Apparently he is among those who  
think that the claims of a particular  
religion—unsupported by any estab-  
lished legal standing such as demon-  
strated descent—should supersede  
the claims of science in dictating the  
contents of a natural history museum.  
Our understanding of the law of the  
land suggests otherwise.

Robert McCormick Adams  
Secretary, Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C.

Indian claims that the graves of  
their ancestors have been disturbed  
are rather dubious in light of actual  
history.

Consider the Ohio countryside  
where I live. The Hopewell, the first  
of the region's mound builders, orig-  
inally lived here. They were killed off  
and replaced by the Adena, also  
mound builders. By the time of the  
first white settlement on the East  
Coast, the Adena had been eradicated  
by the Erie, who populated most of  
the land between the Ohio River and  
Lake Erie. The Erie were killed off by  
the Iroquois Confederacy's brutally  
effective extermination plan—the  
first historically recorded instance of  
genocide in North America.

The Shawnee drifted north to Ohio  
after having been treated badly by the  
Creek in the south. The Shawnee had  
been in Ohio about 100 years when  
the Virginians moved west in the  
1700s. By 1800, most of the Shawnee  
had been driven farther west, and  
those who had remained behind had  
been killed off by whites.

In true historical terms, the Indian  
claims ought to be: "White settlers  
stole the lands that our ancestors  
stole. White anthropologists have  
disturbed the graves of the people our  
ancestors killed to get that land."

Whether it was Indians against In-  
dians or Indians against whites, there  
is enough historical guilt to go around  
for everyone.

Lawrence Grey  
Athens, Ohio

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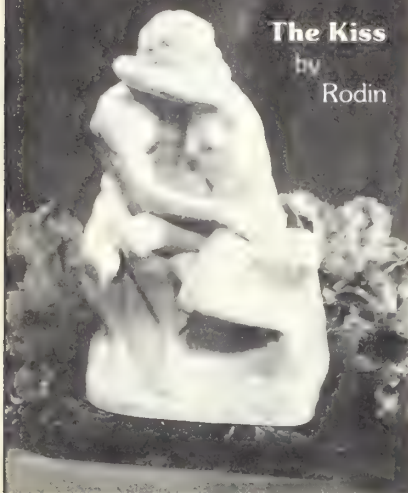
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The ad for Condé Nast's *Traveler* magazine that she annotates ["to ragua, on the Back Burner," December 1988] shows two iguanas peering atop cookware and decries Nast's media image as a war-torn, politically unstable country. The copy asks, "Wouldn't it be refreshing to read instead about the famed guinea stew...?" The advertisement is clever—though Condé Nast's magazine is not.

Granted, the ad's black humor is ethnocentric—courting "readers with taste and discernment"—designed to boost subscriptions to *Traveler*, not living standards in Nicaragua. But it's comforting to know that a bowl of iguana stew has more taste than *Traveler*.

However, Geng's annotation raises an important question. Why are nations of Central America typically portrayed as nothing more than a foreign-policy headache for the United States? We are *not* just a strict region. If Americans would read instead about our peoples, cultural histories, and, of course, cuisines, violence wouldn't dominate the media coverage of our countries. If Americans knew more about these subjects, perhaps there would be less strife to report in the first place.

Louis E. V. Nevaer  
Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico

### True Theater

The introduction to the wretched samplings of Pinter, Mamet, and Hare ["Talk of the Times," February] asserts: "It is customary to attribute this state of crisis [in the art of playwriting] to the triumph of spectacle over dialogue. Characters don't act anymore; they fly, or roller-ski, or cross-dress, or purr."

This unfortunate crisis may well exist in the isolated world of New York City, particularly within the ordinary confines of Broadway. But if you are indeed seeking "evidence that the art of dialogue is still alive and well," try visiting Minneapolis, San Diego, Louisville, Seattle, and, especially, Chicago. I have seen many premieres in Chicago and yet I have never seen a new play in which the characters fly, roller-ski, cross-dress, or purr.

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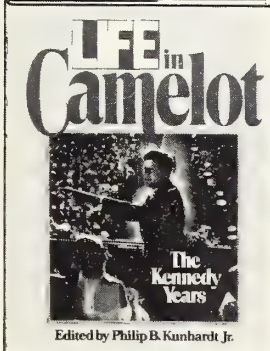
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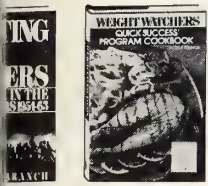
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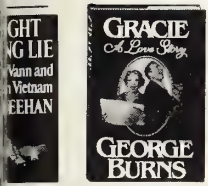
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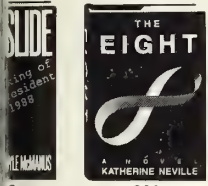
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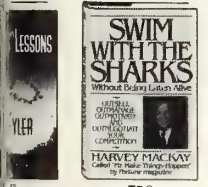
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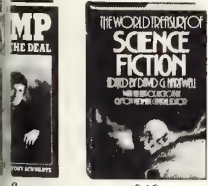
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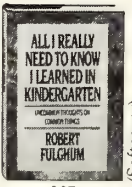
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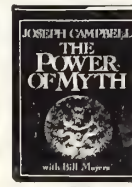
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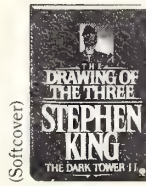
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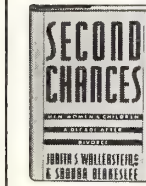
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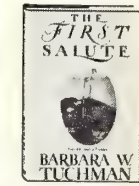
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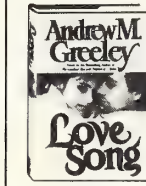
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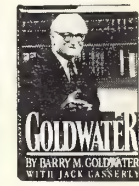
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in Chicago we like to have our dramatic personae actually *speak*, thank you very much.

John Logan  
Chicago

Your pronouncements on "true theater" seem arbitrary and, what's worse, provincial. The notion that contemporary playwrights value spectacle over dialogue and that this constitutes a "state of crisis" from which we are in need of "recovery" strikes me as bizarre. It is only since the emergence of naturalism and realism in the nineteenth century that drama has been based on characters who talk to each other. In historical terms, "conversation" has only recently become the means by which playwrights reveal the "shape of our sensibilities."

Spectacle, of course, has been around a long time. Does King Lear merely "converse" with the winds on the heath? Do God, Adam, and Lucifer simply "talk" with one another in medieval mystery plays?

As for the vulgarities threatening to usurp the throne of King Dialogue, perhaps we should be sorry that *Harper's Magazine* and its aesthetic watchdogs were not around to censure the ancient Greeks for flying their gods above the stage, or to beg the Elizabethans to abstain from their nasty habit of cross-dressing.

Hare, Mamet, and Pinter are all genuinely important playwrights. But to elevate the form in which they work—modern realistic drama—to the pinnacle of theatrical art is narrow and wrong.

Robert Baker  
Palo Alto, Calif.

### Manilovianism

Auto-canonization makes strange bedfellows ["Pop Culture, Auto-canonized," Readings, January]. So it is that I am strapping on my slime-diving suit to defend (oog) Barry Manilow from Jonathan Freedman, who argues that Manilow's greatest

hit, "I Write the Songs," narcissistically evokes "the artist as Pythian image, as one who is fitted, genius to be a sounding board to primal harmonies of the universe."

Yes, "I Write the Songs" is a little ditty. But it is not what man thinks it is. The song was written by Bruce Johnston of the Beach Boys. Both he and Manilow have been some pains to point out that the speaking in the song is neither Johnston nor Manilow but Music itself, some not-very-specific incarnation of ectoplasmic gurgling. Hence the song begins: "I've been alive for a long time. And I wrote the very first song."

Whatever else might be wrong with Barry Manilow, he does not climb out of the primordial soup and bayed out the first waltz catfish aria.

Colin McEnroe  
Hartford, Conn.

Freedman vacillates between views of what academics are

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high culture's literary canon. On  
and, he suggests that the very  
of canon is suspect because it is  
ergetically determined and silences  
analyzed voices. On the other, he  
that a new canon, which gives a  
voice to the previously silent,  
information. These views are in-  
mptible: the academy has done al-  
nothing to *abolish* the canon,  
on canon-formation has become  
object of much discussion. What  
happening is merely a *broadening* of  
on in response to long protest  
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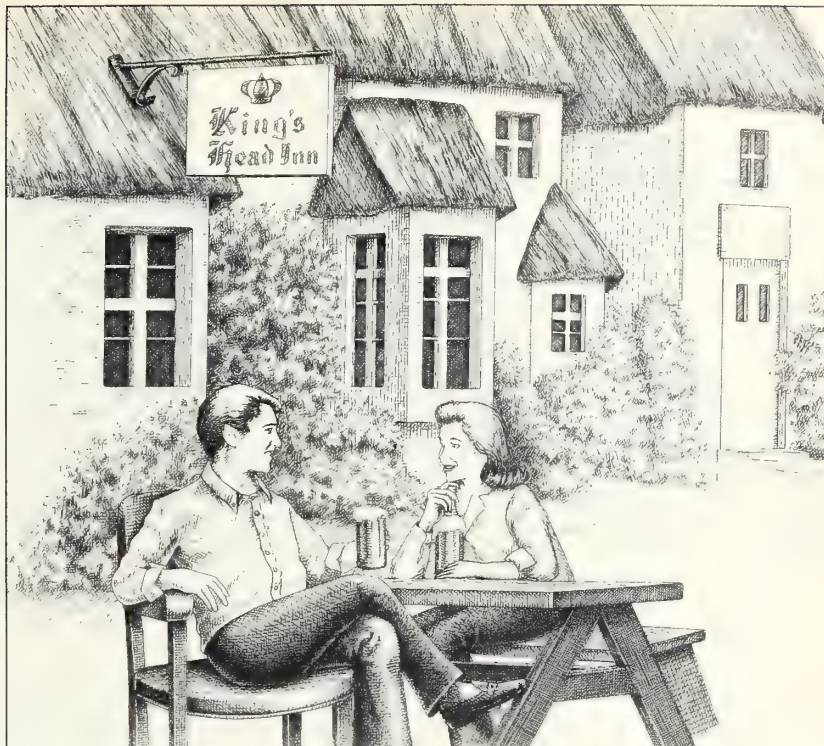
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re. Strong  
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I've had some strange press  
my career, but this tops it all. I  
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Sigs." So substitute Bruce John-  
name wherever the professor  
ne. And anyway, "I Write the  
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it of music."

f professor wasn't serious, tell  
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is serious, then—pardon my  
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Manilow  
geles



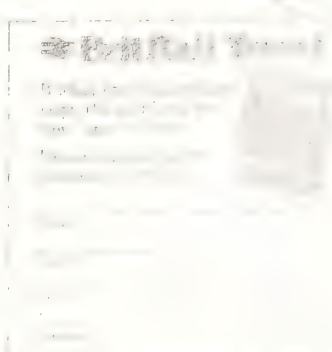
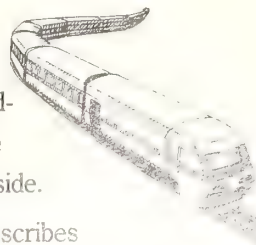
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# NOTEBOOK

## The old school By Lewis H. Lapham

*Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes—our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking around.*

—Chesterton

Last month in this space I suggested that it was unfair to blame the nation's schools for the failures of American education. Schools serve the wishes and expectations of the society to which they belong, and if society cares more about the labels in its head, then our schools will train legions of rich but illiterate bond salesmen. They will continue to do so no matter how much money anybody donates to the new library or how many speeches the chorus of worthy elders addresses to the newspapers and the worried alumni.

The point seemed to me obvious, but a surprising number of readers took surprisingly vehement offense. They wrote to say that I was cynical or feckless or impious or un-American—and demanded that I submit a program of uplifting reform. Easy enough, they said, to carp and criticize, but what, as a public-spirited citizen, did I propose to do?

I've never been very adept in the arts of practical advice, and I'm not even sure that the reform of the nation's schools can be safely construed as a good thing. What would be the political consequences in a society that so comfortably settles for the lowest plausible denominators? The triumph of the American dream presupposes the eager and uncritical consumption of junk in all its commercial declensions. Income doesn't express individual merit or value added to the society; if it did, the ranks of the unpaid would be terrible to be-

hold. Think of the domino effect shuffling through the whole line of second-rate American goods and services—clothes that don't fit and household appliances that don't work, company presidents receiving salaries of \$500,000 a year for achieving the miracle of bankruptcy, doctors who charge princely fees for misdiagnoses and bungled operations, university professors promoted for publishing unintelligible prose, and a Congress that routinely makes laws as notable for their shoddy workmanship as a Florida condominium or an evening of prime-time television.

But let us suppose—at least for the moment and the sake of argument—that the American people chose to rearrange their system of value and order of priority. Assume that they brought their interest in thought in balance with their passion for money. Given such favorable circumstances, I expect the correction of the schools could be carried forward with a minimum of trouble and expense. If I were assigned the task of revision (which in a well-ordered universe I wouldn't be), I would begin by citing the authority of Thomas Jefferson and Albert Jay Nock, both of whom argued that the business of education entails a ruthless winnowing of the available chaff. When Jefferson revised the Virginia Statutes in 1797, he drew up a comprehensive plan for public education that Nock, writing in 1937, summarized, approvingly, as follows:

Each ward should have a primary school for the three R's, open to all. Each year the best pupil in each school should be sent to the grade school, of which there were to be twenty, conveniently situated in various parts of the state. They should be kept there one year or two years, according to results shown, and then all dismissed but one, who should be continued six years. "By this means," said the good old man,

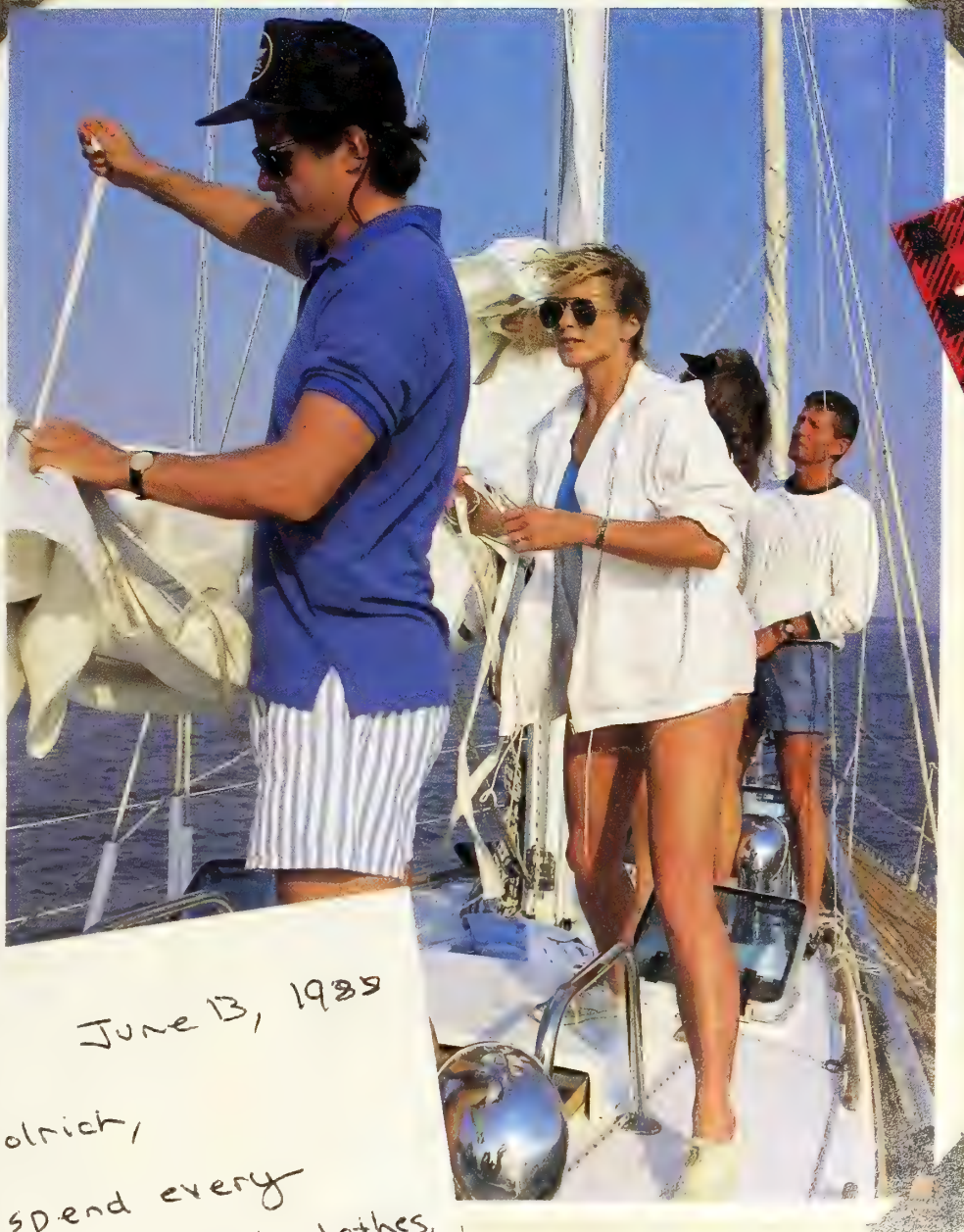
"twenty of the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish annually. The most unfortunate expression of a Democrat to use! At the end of six years, the best ten of the twenty will be sent to college, and the rest will be left to drift."

Jefferson articulated a principle that today would be reviled as elitist. Were he alive and well and at Monticello, I can imagine him being dragged in judgment to the national on *Nightline*. In the ordinary American insults the epithets "elitist," and "elitism" stand above the lesser and preliminary vices expressed in the terms "racist," "racist," and "sexist" pig denounce a fellow citizen as an elitist is to give the cut direct, to declare final excommunication from the community of the ideologically in spirit. But without a frank acknowledgment of the difference between people, I don't see how schools can be rescued from the difficulties.

Although extremely satisfying to the soul, the doctrines of egalitarianism make a mockery of the facts. We could imagine a football coach recruiting his team to conform to the theory of social policy, or a baseball manager troubling himself with the niceties of affirmative action? College deans and high-school principals don't enjoy the same freedom of choice, and their obligatory dismissal of what they know to be true condemns the schools to a mediocrity.

Adapted to a modern circumstance, I can imagine Jefferson's proposal translated into a hierarchy of superior state schools (few in number and necessarily small in size) that would train (beyond the eighth grade) only those students who passed rigorous examinations in two or three languages. None of these schools would





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provide dormitories, athletic fields, or psychiatric counseling. The curricula would be directed toward two fairly modest tasks: the teaching of languages, history, and mathematics; and the instilling of intellectual confidence.

If the schools fail at either of these objectives, then all the rest—whether source readings from the syllabus of Western civilization or lectures on contemporary affairs from *ci-devant* secretaries of state—amounts to little more than a series of exhibitions preserved, like bank notes or trust funds, in the vaults of an intellectual museum.

The study of languages and mathematics provides the student with tools to work at the trade of learning. If he studies Latin, he will read Horace or Cicero or Juvenal; if French, Montaigne or Voltaire or Flaubert. It doesn't matter whether the student comes to appreciate the much-advertised "greatness" of these authors, or whether he can place them accurately within the chronologies of literary criticism. He reads the classical texts because they induce the habit of thought. If the student hopes to put the keenest possible edge to his mind in the available time, then a single chapter of Gibbon serves his purpose more effectively than the collected works of Henry Kissinger. A thorough knowledge of a few writers instills in the student the confidence that he cannot derive from selected passages printed, usually in bad translation, in an anthology chosen by a committee of pedants. If by the age of seventeen the student acquires fluency in three or four languages, this further bolsters his pride of intellect. He learns to distinguish between the hard coin of his own accomplishment and the inflated currency of fashionable opinion.

So also with the study of mathematics. The world rests on an architecture of numbers, and yet most of the students graduated from the nation's leading universities think of mathematics as a magical sequence of runes known only to the druids at IBM, NASA, and the IRS. The mere sight of an algebraic fraction moves them to a feeling of holy dread. A thorough knowledge of high-school geometry would make them less anx-

ious in a world that makes such common use of computer printouts and Einstein's equations.

As for courses in economics, mathematics, appreciation, sociology, and political science, most of them contribute little or nothing to an understanding of their nominal subjects. Their retention from the curricula would compare with the deletion of adjectives from a sophomore's impression of moon rising over Sorrento. A student spent working in a brokerage house, a brothel presents a clearer understanding of economics than does a textual analysis of all the memoirs published by the Harvard Business School; a casual but habitual reading of the Paris newspapers offers more insight into the nature of French politics than a seminar conducted by government functionary under the rubric "Mitterrand, d'Estaing, and the Invisible Left."

Together with its system of secondary schools, the state also could produce a parallel (but less exacting) common education (grammar and secondary schools as well as colleges) in which all students—no matter what their intellectual or financial capacities—could learn the rudiments of writing, reading, history, and arithmetic. This instruction would be as systematic as the teaching of automobile mechanics. Literacy should be presented not as a suite of arcane or exotic skills but as a set of common tools that people learn to use in the way they use forks or compasses or chisels. The students would learn by doing—ceaseless reading (primarily works of literature as opposed to textbooks), ceaseless writing (letters, examinations, advertisements, narrative campaign speeches), by the work of ceaseless calculation (of restaurant and department-store bills as well as interest rates and trade balances), and by the ceaseless study of historical chronologies. Because the schools would teach so few subjects that they could provide their students with a time and space in which to practice (during school hours) the habit of reading and writing.

Jefferson assumed that roughly 10 percent of the population was necessary, but he didn't mean to imply that the majority of his fellow citizens



not otherwise fine people—de-  
intelligent, and possibly favored  
fortune. He simply meant that  
people were not suited to the at-  
mospheres of the higher learning. Nor  
Jefferson wish to prevent anybody  
gaining experience of life (or es-  
aping their parents or acquiring a  
or discovering the wonders of  
Angeles). Certainly everybody  
right to go somewhere, but not  
ssarily to academia.

the Ivy League colleges and uni-  
ties could be understood as clubs,  
state universities as athletic  
os, and the professional schools  
medicine, journalism, etc.) as  
eval guilds, then everybody  
t feel less embarrassed by the  
to feign an interest in Plato.

colleges like Harvard, Princeton,  
Yale could continue as they do  
but relieved of the burden to of-  
nything other than a pleasant  
years under some very old trees in  
ompany of some very fine build-  
The colleges wouldn't award  
s or confer degrees. The students  
wished to do so could read what-  
books captured their fancies.

y might also attend lecture  
ses and write as many papers as  
tutors asked them to write. Oth-  
they would remain free to learn  
to tie their ties, where to go in  
summer, which law schools lead  
e most profitable careers. Corpo-  
ns such as IBM, Honda, or Citi-  
might accept apprentices as  
as the age of thirteen.

o often it is thought that an edu-  
n can be acquired in the way that  
acquires a suntan or an Armani  
as if it were an object instead of a  
of mind. An education begins  
two or three teachers and six or  
a texts (maybe books, maybe  
tions or fossils or trees) that in-  
ce the student to the uniqueness  
s or her own mind. After that it's  
atter of educating oneself. The  
American minds, or at least the  
generous and imaginative of  
rican minds (I think of Lincoln  
Melville and Edison), tended to  
lf-taught. Expressing a sentiment  
Jefferson probably would have  
dded, St. Augustine observed  
it is possible to learn only what  
already knows.

When the dust had settled,  
there was nowhere to turn.  
Especially not the government.

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**AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE:** (Top Left) Christopher Hooley in *LA BAYADERE*. Photo by Gregory Heisler. (Right) Amy Rose in *GAÎTE PARISIENNE*. Photo by Martha Swope. (Bottom) Ross Stretton, Martine van Hamel, Kevin McKenzie in *ÉTUDES*. Photo by Martha Swope.

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# HARPER'S INDEX

- Average change, since 1977, in the annual federal taxes paid by the richest 1 percent of American families : -\$44,440
- Average change, since 1977, in the annual federal taxes paid by the remaining 99 percent : +\$212
- Chances that a caller to the IRS help line will be given inaccurate information : 1 in 3
- Number of U.S. corporations that were not required to pay federal taxes in 1987 : 16
- Number that were not required to pay federal taxes in 1982 : 72
- Estimated portion of U.S. savings-and-loan insolvencies last year that resulted from fraud or abuse : 1/4
- Portion of U.S. government revenue in 1989 that will come from Social Security taxes : 1/4
- Percentage increase in the 1989 U.S. budget deficit if Social Security funds are not counted as revenue : 35
- Number of metaphors George Bush used in his inaugural address : 44
- Percentage of Americans who cannot name any member of Bush's Cabinet : 81
- Percentage of Americans who say that Bush's Cabinet choices are "good" or "excellent" : 44
- Number of office plants a member of Congress is allowed to borrow from the U.S. Botanic Garden : 2
- Total amount of funds left over from last year's House campaigns : \$67,000,000
- Fine that a West German federal legislator must pay for missing a roll-call vote : \$40
- Estimated number of roll-call votes that members of the U.S. Congress missed last year : 19,600
- Percentage of Americans who say "a good car mechanic is worth as much as a member of Congress" : 40
- Number of babies to whom Volkswagen has given savings bonds, since 1964, for being born in one of its cars : 405
- Rank of the 1986, 1987, and 1984 Chevrolet Camaro, among the cars most often stolen : 1,2,3
- Percentage increase, since 1987, in the number of arrests for assault and battery in the Soviet Union : 41
- Chances that a Soviet woman's first pregnancy will end in abortion : 9 in 10
- Chances that an American female will become pregnant by the age of 20 : 2 in 5
- Chances that a Japanese woman won't use a toilet outside of her home : 1 in 3
- Maximum fine for urinating in an elevator in Singapore : \$500
- Jail sentence a Tucson judge gave a lawyer last year for wearing green tennis shoes in his courtroom, in hours : 40
- Percentage of Americans who say their feet are ugly : 13
- Estimated speed of human hair growth, in miles per hour : .00000001
- Percentage of male high-school seniors who say they have used steroids : 7
- Percentage of Americans who say that "a schoolteacher is worth as much as a member of Congress" : 72
- Average number of points a student gains on the math section of the SAT per 100 hours of preparatory classes : 39
- Estimated number of college-application consultants in the United States : 450
- Number of U.S. colleges that offer an undergraduate degree in jazz : 77
- Estimated number of people worldwide who hear Muzak each day : 80,000,000
- Ratio of the average salary of a morning radio personality to that of an afternoon radio personality : 1/4
- Percentage of Americans who like dogs on TV commercials because they are "more exciting than people" : 44
- Amount Americans bet on greyhounds last year : \$3,262,000,000
- Price of a gallon container of Canine Quencher, a bottled water for dogs : 9¢
- Price of a 10-ounce bottle of Mendocino Truffle Mineral Water : \$4
- Average cost per square foot to dig a wine cave in California : \$5
- Price of having a human body mummified by the Summum company of Salt Lake City : \$10,000
- Chances that a deep breath inhaled today will contain a molecule from Julius Caesar's last breath : 1 in 100,000,000,000

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# READINGS

## SALVADORAN DEATH THREATS: A DIALOGUE

*Left*—This letter, dated January 5, 1989, was sent to Roberto Boquiana, the mayor of Mercedes Umaña in El Salvador, by the FMLN, the country's leading revolutionary group. Nearly 150 mayors received personally addressed letters: Boquiana, along with more than seventy other mayors, resigned.

Mr. Roberto Boquiana  
Mayor of Mercedes Umaña

Attention:

In the name of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), accept this revolutionary greeting.

The purpose of this notice is to let you know that you have a period of seventy-two hours, from January 5 until the early hours of January 8, 1989, to publicly relinquish the office of mayor, and to stop participating in political activities.

If you do not respect this resolution, you and your family will be considered a military target by our forces.

Upon complying with the above-stated command, you may continue living in your village or any part of the country problem-free.

Death to Imperialism!

Revolution or Death.

We Will Prevail.

*Right*—From a communiqué titled "The Revolutionary Anti-Communist Action for Extermination [ARDE] Announces Its Appearance and Gives Warning," written by ARDE, one of the death squads now operating in El Salvador. This document, dated December 21, 1988, was circulated to

newspapers and television and radio stations in El Salvador.

Given the terrorist escalation of the FMLN-FDR, supported by the UDN (Communist party), MNR (Marxist-Leninist party), Democratic Convergence (wolves in sheep's clothing), COMADRES (hypocritical front group), UNTS (communist-controlled masses)—

Given the announcement of plans to carry out criminal attacks during Christmas and the New Year, in order to create uneasiness among the Salvadoran people and increase terrorism;

Whereas the Armed Forces are incapable of stopping the terrorist actions of these vandals;

Whereas the organizations and people who say they defend human rights do not even protest;

Whereas until the hordes of terrorist assassins are exterminated, the only way to combat them is with the same force that they use;

Whereas the Salvadoran people are already tired of so much excess and fervently hope that somebody brings an end to the savage beast:

ARDE declares that beginning on the twenty-third of this month:

1. For each bomb that the terrorists explode, at least one bomb will explode in the home of a leader of one of the groups mentioned above, or in the homes of their relatives or supporters.
2. That for each mayor they force to resign, one communist leader will be executed
3. That for each citizen kidnapped or assassinated, two communist leaders will be executed

ARDE knows who is on the far left, watching their homes and can proceed immediately. The will be: Shafik Handal, Mario Aguiñada, Julio Cesar Portillo, Rute Zangueta Antillon, and

such as the UNTS, leaders and agitators of communist-front groups, COMADRES, etc.

This communiqué is being sent to *La Prensa Grafica*, *El Diario de Hoy*, *Diario El Mundo*, *Diario Latino*, and *La Noticia* with the demand that they publish it for three consecutive days.

It is also being sent to television and radio stations demanding that they air it six times a day for three consecutive days.

All of the mass media are warned that those who do not publish it in the manner indicated will be drastically attacked.

Death to the FMLN-FDR! Death to international communism! Death to the traitors of the country!

[Letter to the Editor]

## WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...

*From a letter to the editor that appeared in the January issue of the Washingtonian. The letter was written in response to an article published last November about Senator Brock Adams of Washington State. In the article, Kari Tupper, a young woman who was a friend of the Adams family, describes sexual advances made by the senator, including an episode in which he allegedly drugged her and may have sexually assaulted her.*

I was appalled at the one-sided hatchet job your magazine did on Senator Brock Adams. After working as Senator Adams's assistant for three years, I can speak with some authority about his character and habits. There is no doubt that Brock likes to flirt with women and has certainly been overzealous in pursuing potential conquests on some occasions. I would be sure not to nominate him for any fidelity award, but then many of us would not qualify either. Senator Adams is not, however, the sort of man who would have to resort to drugging a woman in order to take advantage of her.

I also wonder how your reporter or anyone else could believe that a twenty-four-year-old woman could find herself alone in a man's house, sit and watch him pour a "pink liquid" into a glass, and drink it without knowing what she was drinking. This is no innocent young flower, as we are led to believe.

Brock Adams is neither a saint nor a sex-crazed masochist, just a typical Washington politician with a few skeletons in his closet who is getting a bad deal on this one.

Melana Brand  
Centreville, Virginia

[Memorandum]

## AL LIKES IT HOT

*From a memorandum written last fall regarding the food served on Allen H. Neuharth's corporate jet. Neuharth is chairman of the Gannett Corporation and the founder of USA Today. Scotty McGregor is manager of passenger services for the Gannett flight department; Ruth Chandler is a flight attendant.*

TO: Scotty  
FROM: Ruthie  
RE: A.H.N. Catering Updates  
DATE: November 3, 1988

Per our conversation yesterday regarding Mr. Neuharth's catering needs, I am giving you a list of what I have been doing for him this last year.

For short-haul flights (one hour or less) I order only light hors d'oeuvres items. Examples:

- ☐ raw vegetables with dip
- ☐ imported cheeses with imported crackers
- ☐ chocolate and vanilla ice cream

For longer haul trips (one and one half hours or more):

- ☐ raw vegetables with dip
- ☐ imported cheeses with imported crackers
- ☐ fresh salmon with cream cheese and capers (FRESH ONLY!!!!)
- ☐ sandwich tray with assorted breads (including dark breads, kaiser rolls, and roast beef, ham and cheese, and turkey or chicken or pastrami on rye)
- ☐ fish fillet with rice and green vegetable, with roll and butter (I started this entrée a few months ago and he really seems to enjoy it for a change)
- ☐ one pint chocolate and one pint vanilla ice cream

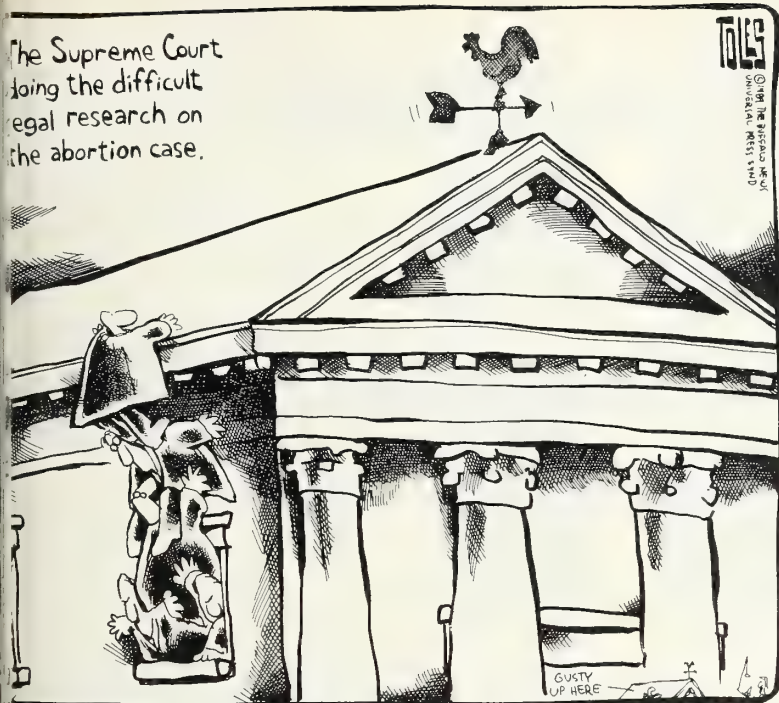
For beverages, we are now keeping chamomile tea on board. Heat this up till *very hot*, steep for about one minute, and squeeze fresh lemon. When presenting, also give him a lemon slice on the side. He is also drinking decaf. I have been diluting it with one-half cup water and heating it in the microwave to make sure it is really hot. To make everyone comfortable, it is best when serving A.H.N. anything hot to double-check that it is *REALLY* hot!

The pilots should make sure that light beer (Coors) is iced up—extremely cold, since he has been drinking this occasionally too.

For breakfast: the majority of the time he eats the vegetable omelet. And, of course, on all flights, request *FRESH SQUEEZED* orange and grapefruit juices and skim milk.



The Supreme Court  
doing the difficult  
legal research on  
the abortion case.



From the Buffalo News.

[Memorandum]

## A TAX BREAK FOR HOSTAGES

From an Internal Revenue Service memorandum  
distributed to regional and assistant commissioners.

DATE: January 4, 1989  
SUBJECT: Taxpayers Taken Hostage in  
Terrorist Action

The Service has had procedures for some time to deal with cases in which a taxpayer has been reported killed in terrorist action (KITA).

It has become obvious that the taking of hostages in terrorist actions must be considered in a similar light, and that a permanent program is necessary. A policy statement is currently in clearance specifying that, except in egregious circumstances, the Service will take no enforcement action during the period a hostage is held captive and for a yet-to-be-determined period of time thereafter.

The International Division has agreed to monitor hostage accounts, but to streamline this process and ensure adequate safeguards, we requested program changes to identify these taxpayers and prevent enforcement action.

In January 1989, International will input an "HSTG" indicator on all known hostage cases.

This will suppress the issuance of enforcement-related notices and Taxpayer Delinquency Investigations (TDIs).

In April 1989, the "HSTG" indicator will be enhanced to suppress all balance-due activity, including the issuance of Taxpayer Delinquent Accounts (TDAs) and the reactivation of Currently Not Collectible cases.

In summary, the above restrictions will prevent issuance of notices, TDAs, and TDIs. Any account that has already progressed into TDA or TDI status must be suspended manually.

[Letter]

## GORBACHEV'S CRISIS OF FAITH (I)

From a letter written by Ayatollah Khomeini and given to Mikhail Gorbachev in January. Ayatollah Abdullah Javadi Amoli, who delivered the letter, reported that Gorbachev's "face turned pale" as he read it.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, Your Excellency, Gorbachev:

Since you assumed power your country has

entered an era of reassessment. As your pluck and audacity in dealing with the world situation will quite likely disrupt the present international balance of power, I would like to draw your attention to the following points:

It is quite likely that your actions will be confined to resolving party disputes and problems confronting the Soviet people. However, if you want to succeed beyond those boundaries, we should first review the policies of your predecessors that have advanced atheism and irreligion and have, without doubt, dealt the most devastating blow to the Soviet people.

Because of the improper economic practices of former communist leaders, the Western world may now seem appealing. However, if you try to put an end to the economic woes of socialism and communism by simply adopting Western capitalism, you will not allay the pain prevalent in Soviet society.

Your Excellency Mr. Gorbachev, we should submit ourselves to the truth. Your country's principal problem does not stem from the economy or a lack of freedom or the issue of ownership; your problem emanates from a lack of real belief in God—the same problem that has dragged the West into decadence and deadlock. Your problem stems from a persistent and futile struggle against God—the actual root of Being and Creation.

It is clear that from now on one will have to look for communism in the museums of world political history, since Marxism cannot meet any of the real needs of human beings. However, I sincerely urge you not to get trapped in the prison of the West and the Arch Satan while tearing down the iron curtains of Marxist idealism.

The Glorious Koran finds fault with the materialist worldview and with those who believe that God does not exist—with those who believe that if He did He would be visible. However, the Koran states, "No vision can grasp Him... He is beyond all comprehension yet is acquainted with all things" (6:103). I am not inclined to entangle you in the subtleties of philosophers, particularly Islamic philosophers. However, I would like to offer a simple example that even a politician can appreciate.

Man inevitably develops an interest in omnipotence and omniscience, both of which are attributes of Almighty God. Man has a desire to reach out to the Absolute and dissolve in it. In principle, the intense interest in eternal life, which is inherent in all people, is indicative of an immortal universe and of immunity to death.

I will not bore you with details, but should Your Excellency wish to fathom the subtleties of the great scholars, please dispatch some of your highly intelligent Soviet experts to Qum so that

in a few years, by the grace of Allah, they will acquire knowledge.

Now, after mentioning these points, I call on Your Excellency to seriously inquire about Islam; it is the exalted and universal values of Islam that can give comfort, save all nations, and resolve the basic problems confronting humanity. A profound investigation into Islam could rid you forever of the issue of Afghanistan and other similar problems.

By granting a measure of religious freedom to some of the Soviet republics, you have shown that you no longer believe that religion "is the opiate of the people." Is a religion that has made Iran as adamant as a mountain in the face of the superpowers an opiate of the people? Is a religion that desires justice in the world and the freeing of man from material and spiritual shackles the opiate of the people? In fact, a religion that puts the material and spiritual capital of all countries at the disposal of the superpowers and other powers and also demands that its followers refrain from politics is, indeed, the real opiate of the people. This is no longer the true religion—we Iranians call it American-sponsored religion.

In conclusion, I explicitly announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the greatest and strongest base of the Islamic world, can fill the faith vacuum pervasive in your system.

Anyway, Iran, as in the past, believes in and respects good-neighborly and bilateral relations.

"Peace and blessings be upon those who seek truth."

Rohollah al-Mossavi al-Khomeini

[Essay]

## GORBACHEV'S CRISIS OF FAITH (II)

*From "When God Fails, Russia Remains," by Régis Debray, in the Winter 1988–89 issue of New Perspectives Quarterly. Debray served until recently as a foreign-policy adviser to President François Mitterrand. Translated from the French by Michael Davies.*

**T**he notion that progress may resurrect the archaic, or that "the new" may reactivate "the old," collides head-on with our linear view of reality. Yet this is precisely what appears to be happening in the Soviet Union under *perestroika*. In that beleaguered land, the process of modernization has become inseparable from the renewal of tradition.

Mikhail Gorbachev's campaign marks a



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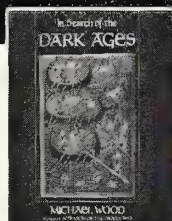
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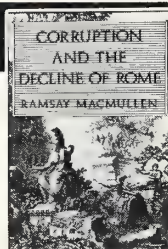
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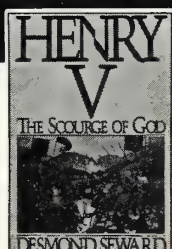
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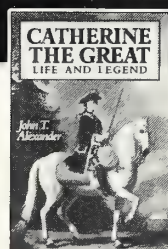
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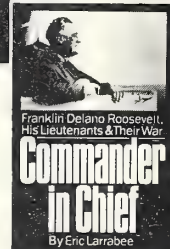
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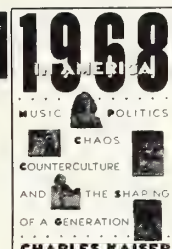
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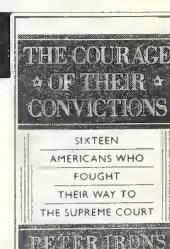
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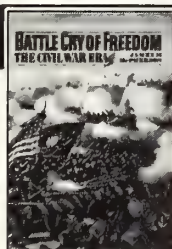
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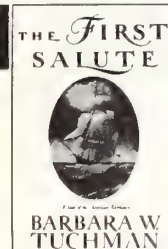
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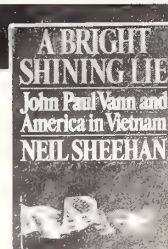
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movement of the Russian pendulum first set in motion in the sixteenth century, when it began its swing from the Asiatic despotism of Ivan the Terrible to the European reformism of Peter the Great. Without doubt, Gorbachev is now pushing the pendulum in the direction of individual freedom. In the shadows, however, a resurgent despotic tradition may well be waiting for the current swing to run its course.

In order to remedy economic stagnation as well as underdevelopment, the Soviet Union must thoroughly democratize its political life. Paradoxically, that democratization cannot help but reawaken the powerful ethnic, nationalist, and religious impulses repressed by decades of brutal bureaucratic rule.

Beneath their putative Soviet identity, Armenians remain essentially Christian, the Azerbaijanis are Muslim, Ukrainians are Catholic, and Russians are Orthodox. A society that has watched the future it was promised seventy years ago evaporate with each passing day instinctively returns to its roots. The law of "the return of the repressed" is as valid for a people as it is for an individual.

Thus, the real question posed by the end of Brezhnev's "time of stagnation" is whether Gorbachev's *perestroika* is up to the challenge of resurgent traditionalism. Which tendency will prevail in Homo Sovieticus? The re-emergence of the traditional ethnic and religious identities or the further emergence of individual freedoms? Is the radiant future of the Empire more likely to resemble a Golden Age of Solzhenitsyn or of Sakharov?

In a multi-ethnic empire, the return of the repressed translates into the explosion of the Empire. For what will hold it all together when communist ideology has lost all its believers?

As a secular religion, communism never ensured the integration of ethnic groups. Rather, it subordinated them for a time to a common national "faith" and authority. Yet under communism—a *civil* religion, and thus subject to the empirical tests of reality—the effective exercise of power cannot be divorced from adherence to its stated ends for too long. Once that schism allows cynicism to creep in, the system of political domination enters its final phase.

Since there is no such thing as an agnostic society, the crisis of ideological faith puts religion back in the saddle. Thus, in this great superpower of 270 million people, one finds Orthodox power, Sunni Muslim power, Catholic power, Jewish power, and even some fledgling Evangelical sects existing alongside an impotent communism that can no longer control and unify these divergent strains. The salvation of the world by the industrial proletariat has not come to pass, but the "people of God" are still here

and they still yearn for salvation. Those who picture the future of the Soviet Union in terms of steel, glass, and concrete will surely be surprised at the number of domes, minarets, and church towers that will characterize the next century's landscape, just as they did before 1917.

A single ideology is an instrument of unification, order, and cohesion that deflects centrifugal forces—ethnic, religious, and regional. Yet, that integrating structure also requires a credible belief system. Marxism, by virtue of its essential intolerance and comprehensiveness, permitted the Communist party to piece together the puzzle of contradictory allegiances much the way Constantine utilized Christianity to arrest the disintegration of the Roman Empire.

From an ideological point of view, the Russian Empire has passed its zenith, and Gorbachev, unlike Constantine, has no new religion of salvation at his disposal. At the peak of his power pyramid, Gorbachev lacks the metaphysical means to achieve his political ends. The only means at his disposal—nationalism, ethnic identity, and religion—don't lend themselves to the modernization he advocates. By their very nature, they are incompatible with the supranational myth of Homo Sovieticus. Indeed, the only "spiritual" resources available to Gorbachev to reinvigorate the USSR's demoralized system cancel out the only ideology he can officially call on.

As democratization advances, this central identity crisis intensifies the resurgence of ethnic and religious memory. Each group, as it rises in opposition to its neighbor, heralds the death of the official supra-ethnic religion and threatens the outbreak of classic, and potentially brutal, religious-ethnic violence.

[Notes]

## REMEMBERING AIDS

From "I Remember," by "John Doe," in the January 10 issue of the *Village Voice*, the *New York City weekly*.

**I** remember when people called it "gay cancer."

I remember when everyone thought you got it from poppers.

I remember when the acronym hadn't yet been coined.

I remember when a friend, whose father ran a government health agency, had appendicitis and how his father wouldn't let the doctors give him a transfusion, and wondering what he knew



that no one else knew.

I remember when some of the early ones got sick all the time and made jokes about being run-down, then died without knowing what hit them.

I remember wondering, much later, whether they'd been better off.

I remember seeing R. in a restaurant after he was diagnosed and being amazed at his healthy complexion.

I remember hearing that R. had enrolled in a drug test that involved a placebo.

I remember hearing that a week after the protocol ended R. came down with pneumocystis.

I remember keeping up with each generation of acronyms: GRID, AIDS, SIDA, HIV.

I remember running into B. one year on the subway and hearing his story about taking time off to help an ex-boyfriend die.

I remember running into R. another year at the Palladium and listening to his story about taking time off to help his brother die.

I remember when the obits began to mention unrelated survivors as life partners or longtime companions.

I remember how it incensed me when journalists reported that the disease hadn't yet spread to the "general population."

I remember my surprise when women began to get it, even women who didn't use drugs.

I remember the syphilis theory, the swine-fever theory, the germ-warfare theory, and that crazy guy who posterized the city with paranoid screeds about the CIA.

I remember how relieved F. was when the thing on his face turned out to be an ordinary melanoma.

I remember how friends would casually palpate their glands as we talked.

I remember when N.'s shrink forbade him to do that.

I remember trying to remember that no matter what you thought you knew about people, you never truly knew what they did for sex.

I remember wild rumors about guys who went crazy when they found out and had sex with anyone they could pick up.

I remember thinking those stories must be untrue.

I remember attending a GMHC [Gay Men's Health Crisis] buddy meeting and feeling angry when the buddies criticized "clients" who went on having sex.

I remember when I stopped having sex.

I remember when I started censoring fantasies that involved unsafe practices.

I remember when I made a list of all my sex partners and tried to calculate the odds.

I remember thinking I was lucky they all fit on a list.

[Rug]

## WAR WEAVE



COURTESY LUCA BRANCATI

From "The Afghan War Rugs," by Ewa Kuryluk, in the February issue of *Arts Magazine*. Afghan carpets incorporating contemporary military motifs began appearing shortly after the Soviet invasion and continue to be produced, often in refugee camps. The carpets are traditionally woven by women and children.

I remember realizing that it was much more of a crapshoot than I could figure.

I remember the first year the subject came up once in every conversation.

I remember thinking that I'd have to consider junkies as human beings.

I remember when my AA friend began to report that it was "sweeping the rooms."

I remember when my former-drug-abuser friend told me she thought she was "ARC-ing."

I remember the whole year my officemate spent shouting at doctors on the phone while his life partner was dying.

I remember everyone around him pretending not to hear.

I remember the horror stories, the miracle cures, the crystal cures, the religious conversions, the radical diets.

I remember when I finally took the test, carrying a vial of my blood to Bellevue on the Second Avenue bus.

I remember my doctor's failure to warn me that using a fake name (like the one I'm using here) was best when you were tested for HIV.

I remember not being able to get life insurance later on.

I remember my doctor's chipper attitude when he said I'd make a good candidate for AZT.

I remember bigots at the Washington march shouting "AIDS is the cure."

I remember the first time I recognized a KS [Kaposi's sarcoma] lesion.

I remember catching myself saying "victims" sometimes.

I remember thinking you were safe after five years, then seven, then ten, and then reading in the *New York Times* that the virus could escape detection.

I remember dealing with that.

[Memorandum]

## THE FUTURE OF WORK

*Adapted from "On Planning a Career," a memorandum Robert B. Reich recently circulated to his undergraduate students. Reich is a professor of political economy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.*

**I**t's easy to predict what jobs you *shouldn't* prepare for. Thanks to the wonders of fluoride, America, in the future, will need fewer dentists. Nor is there much of a future in farming. The federal government probably won't provide long-term employment unless you aspire to work in the Pentagon or the Veterans Administration (the only two departments accounting for new federal jobs in the last decade). And think twice before plunging into higher education. The real wages of university professors have been declining for some time, the hours are bad, and all you get are complaints.

Moreover, as the American economy merges with the rest of the world's, anyone doing rela-

tively unskilled work that could be done more cheaply elsewhere is unlikely to prosper for long. Imports and exports now constitute 26 percent of our gross national product (up from 9 percent in 1950), and barring a new round of protectionism, the portion will move steadily upward. Meanwhile, 10,000 people are added to the world's population every hour, most of whom, eventually, will happily work for a small fraction of today's average American wage.

This is good news for most of you, because it means that you'll be able to buy all sorts of things far more cheaply than you could if they were made here (provided, of course, that what your generation does instead produces even more value). The resulting benefits from trade will help offset the drain on your income resulting from paying the interest on the nation's foreign debt and financing the retirement of aging baby boomers like me. The bad news, at least for some of you, is that most of America's traditional, routinized manufacturing jobs will disappear. So will routinized service jobs that can be done from remote locations, like keypunching of data transmitted by satellite. Instead, you will be engaged in one of two broad categories of work: either complex services, some of which will be sold to the rest of the world to pay for whatever Americans want to buy from the rest of the world, or person-to-person services, which foreigners can't provide for us because (apart from new immigrants and illegal aliens) they aren't here to provide them.

**C**omplex services involve the manipulation of data and abstract symbols. Included in this category are insurance, engineering, law, finance, computer programming, and advertising. Such activities now account for almost 25 percent of our GNP, up from 13 percent in 1950. They already have surpassed manufacturing (down to about 20 percent of GNP). Even *within* the manufacturing sector, executive, managerial, and engineering positions are increasing at a rate almost three times that of total manufacturing employment. Most of these jobs, too, involve manipulating symbols.

Such endeavors will constitute America's major contribution to the rest of the world in the decades ahead. You and your classmates will be exporting engineering designs, financial services, advertising and communications advice, statistical analyses, musical scores and film scripts, and other creative and problem-solving products. How many of you undertake these sorts of jobs, and how well you do at them, will determine what goods and services America can summon from the rest of the world in return,



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**100603. Kenny G: Silhouette.** We've Saved The Best For Last, more. (Arista)

**154404. Chicago 19.** Don't Wanna Live With-  
out Your Love, Heart In  
Pieces, etc. (Reprise)

**115457. Itzhak Perlman:**  
French Violin Show-  
pieces. (DG DIGITAL)

**144578. The Judds:**  
Greatest Hits. (RCA)

**223559. Beach Boys:**  
Endless Summer.  
21 Hits. (Capitol)

**115306. Handel, Water Music—Trevor Pinnock.**  
(Archiv DIGITAL)

**100601. Squeeze:**  
Classics. (A&M)

**104898. Cream: Disraeli Gears.** Sunshine Of Your Love, more. (Polydor)

**100707. Tiffany: Hold An Old Friend's Hand.**  
(MCA)

**173233. James Galway:**  
Greatest Hits. (RCA)

**154633. Steve Win-  
wood: Roll With It.** Don't You Know What The Night Can Do?, Holding On, etc. (Virgin)

**100470. Vangelis:**  
Direct. (Arista)



115436

**153582. Tracy Chapman:**  
Fast Car, Talkin' Bout A Revolution, Baby Can I Hold You, etc. (Elektra)

**100517. Phil Collins:**  
Buster/Orig.  
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Hearts, more. (Atlantic)

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Should've Known Better, etc. (EMI)

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[Press Release]

## THE ART OF DESKCAPING

*From "Dos and Don'ts of Deskcaping," a press release issued by A.T. Cross Company.*

**D**oes your office communicate power? Do you select your office accessories with as much care as you select your clothes, watch, or jewelry? You can turn your work space into a powerful statement by "personalizing" it with desk accessories, one of the most overlooked components of office decor.

### DOs

Do accessorize your office with rich-looking materials. A.T. Cross Company research shows that most executives own or are given desk sets made of onyx, marble, or fine wood.

Do consider color in the deskcape. Traditional offices should be complemented by rich, classic colors, such as black and walnut. These communicate "class" and "prestige" and add an executive "aura" to a deskcape.

Do include a few oddities, such as an antique inkwell or a cultural artifact placed on a credenza. They reflect your unique personal style and say you have a special story to tell.

### DON'Ts

Don't let clutter invade your desk top. For example, don't leave pencils and pens strewn all over your desk, and don't store them in junky mugs and pencil cups. Instead, add a desk set or convenient pen stand. A double desk set (two writing instruments) in onyx or select walnut and leather is appropriate for high-level executives. A white marble desk set with one writing instrument will complement a mid-level office decor. You probably carry a fine writing instrument when you leave the office. Let your desk carry one too.

Don't overwhelm your deskcape with mementos. If you want photographs, limit the number to two and the size to five by seven inches.

Don't keep a blotter that is frayed, dirty, or doodled on. It takes only a few dollars to replace a worn blotter and add a bright, new look to your desk top.

With a little planning, deskcaping not only will help you maintain control over your work but will also help you create an office that tells others you're in control.

and thus—to some extent—your generation's standard of living.

You say you plan to become an investment banker? A lawyer? I grant you that these vocations have been among the fastest growing and most lucrative during the past decade. The securities industry in particular has burgeoned. Between 1977 and 1987, securities-industry employment nearly doubled, rising 10 percent a year, compared with the average yearly job growth of 1.9 percent in the rest of the economy. The crash of October 1987 temporarily stemmed the growth, but by mid-1988 happy days were here again. Nor have securities workers had particular difficulty making ends meet. Their average income grew 21 percent over the decade, compared with a 1 percent rise in the income of everyone else. (But be careful with these numbers; relatively few securities workers enjoyed such majestic compensation. The high average is partly due to the audacity of people such as Henry Kravis and George Roberts, each of whom takes home a tidy \$70 million per year.)

Work involving securities and corporate law has been claiming one-quarter of all new private sector jobs in New York City and more than a third of all the new office space in that industrious town. Other major cities are not too far behind. A simple extrapolation of the present trend suggests that by 2020 one out of every three American college graduates will be an investment banker or a lawyer. Of course, this is unlikely. Long before that milestone could be achieved, the nation's economy will have dried up like a raisin, as financiers and lawyers squeeze out every ounce of creative, productive juice. Thus my advice: Even if you could bear spending your life in such meaningless but lucrative work, at least consider the fate of the nation before deciding to do so.

**P**erson-to-person services will claim everyone else. Many of these jobs will not require much skill, as is true of their forerunners today. Among the fastest growing in recent years: custodians and security guards, restaurant and retail workers, day-care providers. Secretaries and clerical workers will be as numerous as now, but they'll spend more of their time behind and around electronic machines (imported from Asia) and have fancier titles, such as "paratechnical assistant" and "executive paralegal operations manager."

Teachers will be needed (we'll be losing more than a third of our entire corps of elementary- and high-school teachers through attrition over the next seven years), but don't expect their real pay to rise very much. Years of public breast-beating about the quality of American education notwithstanding, the average teacher



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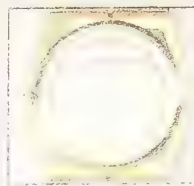
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[Maps]

## THE TWO AMERICAS



From *The Clustering of America*, by Michael J. Weiss, published by Harper & Row. Using information developed by the Claritas Corporation, a market-research firm, Weiss demonstrates some of the ways the United States can be divided, according to various cultural, political, and social patterns. The map at top divides the country into areas in which either Coke or Pepsi buyers predominate. The map at bottom shows the general distribution of buyers of Hellmann's Mayonnaise and Kraft Miracle Whip.

today earns \$28,000—only 3.4 percent more, in constant dollars, than he or she earned fifteen years ago.

Count on many jobs catering to Americans at play—hotel workers, recreation directors, television and film technicians, aerobics instructors (or whatever their twenty-first-century equivalents will call themselves). But note that Americans will have less leisure time to enjoy these pursuits. The average American's free time has been shrinking for more than fifteen years, as women move into the work force (and so spend more of their free time doing household chores) and as all wage earners are forced

to work harder just to maintain their standard of living. Expect the trend to continue.

The most interesting and important person-to-person jobs will be in what is now unpretentiously dubbed "sales." Decades from now most salespeople won't be just filling orders. Salespeople will be helping customers define their needs, then working with design and production engineers to customize products and services in order to address those needs. This is because standardized (you can have it in any color as long as it's black) products will be long gone. Flexible manufacturing and the new information technologies will allow a more tailored fit—whether it's a car, machine tool, insurance policy, or even a college education. Those of you who will be dealing directly with customers will thus play a pivotal role in the innovation process, and your wages and prestige will rise accordingly.

But the largest number of personal-service jobs will involve health care, which already consumes about 12 percent of our GNP, and that portion is rising. Because every new medical technology with the potential to extend life is infinitely valuable to those whose lives might be extended—even for a few months or weeks—society is paying huge sums to stave off death. By the second decade of the next century, when my generation of baby boomers will have begun to decay, the bill will be much higher. Millions of corroding bodies will need doctors, nurses, nursing-home operators, hospital administrators, technicians who operate and maintain all the fancy machines that will measure and temporarily halt the deterioration, hospice directors, home-care specialists, directors of outpatient clinics, and euthanasia specialists, among many others.

Most of these jobs won't pay very much because they don't require much skill. Right now the fastest growing job categories in the health sector are nurse's aides, orderlies, and attendants, which compose about 40 percent of the health-care work force. The majority are women; a large percentage are minorities. But even doctors' real earnings show signs of slipping. As malpractice insurance rates skyrocket, many doctors go on salary in investor-owned hospitals, and their duties are gradually taken over by physician "extenders" such as nurse-practitioners and midwives.

**W**hat's the best preparation for one of these careers?

Advice here is simple: You won't be embarking on a career, at least as we currently define the term, because few of the activities I've mentioned will proceed along well-defined paths to progressively higher levels of responsibility. As



the economy evolves toward services tailored to the particular needs of clients and customers, hands-on experience will count for more than formal rank. As technologies and markets rapidly evolve, moreover, the best preparation will be through cumulative learning on the job rather than formal training completed years before.

This means that academic degrees and professional credentials will count for less; on-the-job training, for more. American students have it backwards. The courses to which you now gravitate—finance, law, accounting, management, and other practical arts—may be helpful to understand how a particular job is *now* done (or, more accurately, how your instructors did it years ago when they held such jobs or studied the people who held them), but irrelevant to how such a job *will* be done. The intellectual equipment needed for the job of the future is an ability to define problems, quickly assimilate relevant data, conceptualize and reorganize the information, make deductive and inductive leaps with it, ask hard questions about it, discuss findings with colleagues, work collaboratively to find solutions, and then convince others. And these sorts of skills can't be learned in career-training courses. To the extent they can be found in universities at all, they're more likely to be found in subjects such as history, literature, philosophy, and anthropology—in which students can witness how others have grappled for centuries with the challenge of living good and productive lives. Tolstoy and Thucydides are far more relevant to the management jobs of the future, for example, than are Hersey and Blanchard (*Management of Organizational Behavior*, Prentice-Hall, 5th Edition, 1988).

[Essay]

## TO THE BORDER

From "Proofs," by Richard Rodriguez, an introduction to *To the Promised Land*. The book, a collection of photographs taken near the Mexican border by Ken Light, was published by Aperture in association with the California Historical Society. Rodriguez's article "Across the Borders of History" appeared in the March 1987 issue of Harper's Magazine.

**Y**ou stand around. You smoke. You spit. You are wearing your two shirts, two pants, two underpants. Jesús says if they chase you, throw that bag down. Your plastic bag is your mama, all you have left: the yellow cheese she wrapped has formed a translucent rind; the laminated scapular of the Sacred Heart nestles flame in its

cleft. Put it in your pocket. Inside. Put it in your underneath pants' pocket. The last hour of Mexico is twilight, the shuffling of feet. Jesús says they are able to see in the dark. They have X rays and helicopters and searchlights. Jesús says wait, just wait, till he says. Though most of the men have started to move. You feel the hand of Jesús clamp your shoulder, fingers cold as ice. *Venga, corre*. You run. All the rest happens without words. Your feet are tearing dry grass, your heart is lashed like a mare. You trip, you fall. You are now in the United States of America. You are a boy from a Mexican village. You have come into the country on your knees with your head down. You are a man.

Papa, what was it like?

I am his second son, his favorite child, his confidant. After we have polished the De Soto, we sit in the car and talk. I am sixteen years old. I fiddle with the knobs of the radio. He is fifty.

He will never say. He was an orphan there. He had no mother, he remembered none. He lived in a village by the ocean. He wanted books and he had none.

You are lucky, boy.

In the Fifties, Mexican men were contracted to work in America as *braceros*, farm workers. I saw them downtown in Sacramento. I saw men my age drunk in Plaza Park on Sundays, on their backs on the grass. I was a boy at sixteen, but I was an American. At sixteen, I wrote a gossip column, "The Watchful Eye," for my school paper.

Or they would come into town on Monday nights for the wrestling matches or on Tuesdays for boxing. They worked over in Yolo County. They were men without women. They were Mexicans without Mexico.

On Saturdays, they came into town to the Western Union office where they sent money—money turned into humming wire and then turned back into money—all the way down into Mexico. They were husbands, fathers, sons. They kept themselves poor for Mexico.

Much that I would come to think, the best I would think about male Mexico, came as much from those chaste, lonely men as from my own father who made false teeth and who—after thirty years in America—owned a yellow stucco house on the east side of town.

The male is responsible. The male is serious. A man remembers.

Fidel, the janitor at church, lived over the garage at the rectory. He had a Spanish and some Mexican. He had a wife and children, people said; some said he had grown children. But too many years he had passed and he didn't go back.

Fidel had to do for himself. Fidel had a clean piece of linoleum on the floor, he had an iron bed, he had a table and a chair. He had a coffee-pot and a frying pan and a knife and a fork and a spoon, I guess. And everything else Fidel sent back to Mexico. Sometimes, on summer nights, I would see his head through the bars of the little window over the garage at the rectory.

The migration of Mexico is not only international, south to north. The epic migration of Mexico, and throughout Latin America, is from the village to the city. And throughout Latin America, the city has ripened, swollen with the century. Lima, Caracas, Mexico City. So the journey to Los Angeles is much more than a journey from Spanish to English. It is the journey from *tú*—the familiar, the erotic, the intimate pronoun—to the repellent *usted* of strangers' eyes.

It is 1986 and I am a journalist. I am asking questions of a Mexican woman in her East L.A. house. She is watchful and pretty, in her thirties, she wears an apron. Her two boys—Roy and Danny—are playing next door. Her husband is a tailor. He is sewing in a bright bedroom at the back of the house. His feet work the humming treadle of an old Singer machine as he croons Mexican love songs by an open window.

*I will send for you or I will come home rich.*

Mexico is poor. But my mama says there are no love songs like the love songs of Mexico. She hums a song she can't remember. The ice cream there is creamier than here. Someday we will see. The people are kinder—poor, but kinder to each other.

My mother's favorite record is "*Mariachis de Mexico y Pepe Villa con Orquesta.*"

Men sing in Mexico. Men are strong and silent. But in song the Mexican male is granted license he is otherwise denied. The male can admit longing, pain, desire.

HAIH—EEEE—a cry like a comet rises over the song. A cry like mock weeping tickles the refrain of Mexican love songs. The cry is meant to encourage the balladeer—it is the raw edge of his sentiment. HAIH—EEEE. It is the man's sound. A ticklish arching of semen, a node wrung up a guitar string, until it bursts in a descending cascade of mockery. HAI. HAI. HAI. HAI. The cry of a jackal under the moon, the whistle of the phallus, the maniacal song of the skull.

Mexico is on the phone—long-distance.

A crow alights upon a humming wire, bobs up and down, needles the lice within his vest, surveys with clicking eyes the field, the cloud of

mites, then dips into the air and flies away.

Juanito killed! My mother shrieks, drops the phone in the dark. She cries for my father. For light.

The earth quakes. The peso flies like chaff in the wind. The police chief purchases his mistress a mansion on the hill.

The door bell rings. I split the blinds to see three nuns standing on our front porch.

Mama. Mama.

Monsignor Lyons has sent three Mexican nuns over to meet my parents. The nuns have come to Sacramento to beg for Mexico at the eleven o'clock Mass. We are the one family in the parish that speaks Spanish. As they file into our living room, the nuns smell pure, not sweet, pure like candles or like laundry.

The nun with a black mustache sighs at the end of each story the other two tell. Orphan. Leper. Crutch. Dry land. One eye. Casket.

*¡Que lástima!*

Tell me, Papa.

What?

About Mexico.

I lived with the family of my uncle. I was the orphan in the village. I used to ring the church bells in the morning, many steps up in the dark. When I'd get up to the tower I could see the ocean.

The village, Papa, the houses too...

The ocean. He studies the polished hood of our beautiful blue De Soto.

Relatives invited relatives. Entire Mexican villages got re-created in three stories of a single house. In the fall, after the harvest in the Valley, families of Mexican adults and their American children would load up their cars and head back to Mexico in caravans, for weeks, for months. The schoolteacher said to my mother what a shame it was the Mexicans did that—took their children out of school.

Like Wandering Jews. They carried their home with them, back and forth; they had no true home but the tabernacle of memory.

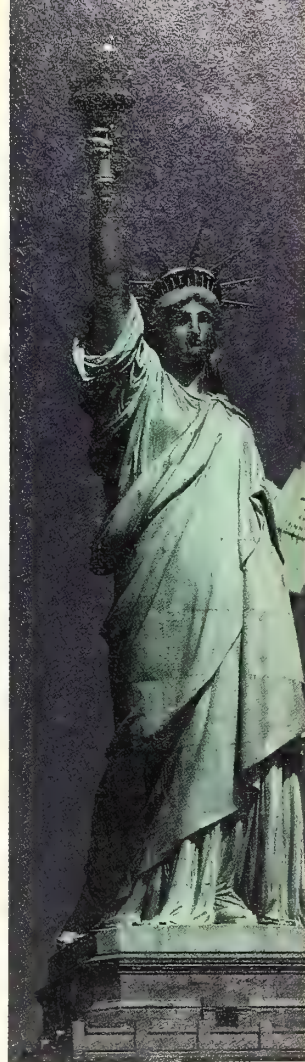
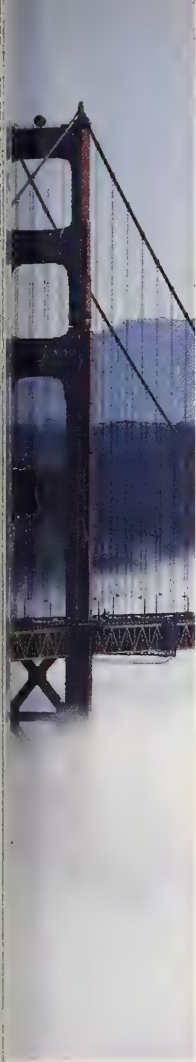
Each year the American kitchen takes on a new appliance.

The children are fed and grow tall. They go off to school with children from Vietnam, from Kansas, from Hong Kong. They get into fights. They come home and they say dirty words.

The city will win. The city will give the children all the village could not—VCRs, hair-styles, drumbeat. The city sings mean songs, dirty songs. But the city will sing the children a great Protestant hymn.

*You can be anything you want to be.*





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*A Power In The Land*



From *Museology*, a book of photographs taken in museums, by Richard Ross, published this month by Aperture. Ross's photographs are currently on display at the University Art Museum in Santa Barbara, California.

Your coming of age. It is early. From your bed you watch your mama moving back and forth under the light. The bells of the church ring in the dark. Mama crosses herself. From your bed you watch her back as she wraps the things you will take.

You are sixteen. Your father has sent for you. That's what it means: He has sent an address in Nevada. He is there with your uncle. You remember your uncle remembering snow with his beer.

You dress in the shadows. You move toward the table, the circle of light. You sit down. You force yourself to eat. Mama stands over you to make the sign of the cross on your forehead with her thumb. You are a man. You smile. She puts the bag of food in your hands. She says she has told *La Virgen*.

Then you are gone. It is gray. You hear a little breeze. It is the rustle of your old black Dueña, the dog, taking her shortcuts through the weeds, crazy Dueña, her pads on the dust. She is following you.

You pass the houses of the village, each window is a proper name. You pass the store. The bar. The lighted window of the clinic where the pale medical student from Monterrey lives alone and reads his book full of sores late into the night.

You want to be a man. You have the directions in your pocket: an address in Tijuana and a map with a yellow line that leads from the highway to an X on a street in Reno. You are afraid, but you have never seen snow.

You are just beyond the cemetery. The breeze

has died. You turn and throw a rock back at La Dueña, where you know she is—where you will always know where she is. She will not go past the cemetery. She will turn in circles like a *loca* and bite herself.

The dust takes on gravel, the path becomes a rutted road which leads to the highway. You walk north. The sky has turned white overhead. Insects click in the fields. In time, there will be a bus.

*I will send for you or I will come home rich.*

[Essay]

## DON'T NEED A WEATHERMAN?

From "Coming Next: The Weather as a Political Issue," by Jay Rosen, in the Spring 1989 *Et Cetera*, a journal published by the International Society of General Semantics. Rosen teaches journalism at New York University.

**A**lone among experts on television, the weatherman is constantly being humbled by events. His outstanding trait is usually a sense of humor, which enables him to bear the abuse sent his way by clever newscasters avenging a wrong prediction. In a sense, the weather on television is one long joke. The weatherman pretends to take responsibility for what the skies bring and the other members of the news team



pretend to hold him responsible.

Tossing out terms like "precipitation," "barometric pressure," and "relative humidity," the weatherman attempts to speak the language of science, but his ability to mystify the audience is limited. A weather prediction is so utterly comprehensible ("scattered showers tomorrow morning, then gradual clearing by midday, high in the low seventies") and the next day's skies so obvious to all that everyone can easily evaluate the weatherman's performance. "They said it was going to be sunny all day," we remark to each other as the clouds descend, smug in our knowledge of the fallibility of science. On the news that evening, "they" are asked to account for their errors, satisfying in a small way our desire to see authority punished for its lies. TV personifies the weather in this figure of dubious authority, allowing us to project onto him fantasies of gratitude (for a "nice day" tomorrow) and rage (for this "miserable weather"). Lately, however, as the earth's atmosphere gives signs of its growing discontent with civilization, there's reason to wonder how long this comforting fiction can last.

Although we enjoy holding him responsible for the skies, we never seriously condemn the weatherman for his predictions because we assume that humans have no role in the direction the weather takes. In legal terms, the weather is an "act of God"; in the language of childhood, it is Mother Nature who stirs up a storm; in everyday discourse the passive tense eliminates the causal agent completely—we say "it's raining again." The equality of all persons before acts of God is part of what makes the weather an appealing topic for television. Not only is everyone affected to some degree by the weather, but everyone is innocent—we are all either hapless victims or grateful beneficiaries of what the skies bring. The topic offends no one. This happy match between the weather and the commercial aims of television is reflected in the cheerful persona of the weatherman and in the generous amount of time allotted his department in the newscast.

While the weatherman is sometimes the bearer of bad news, the bad news he brings says nothing about the badness of human nature or the bad deeds of powerful people. To speak of the weather is to speak of a world in which all human motives have been banned, where there is no history or politics, no power except that exercised by nature on all creatures at once. The harm that may come to crops, homes, and cities from various weather disasters does not disturb the essential harmlessness of the weather as a topic for television, for the violence the victims suffer is without any social cause. Thus, even the bad news the weatherman may bring is actu-

ally good news, in that it suggests that a world without social causes still exists, that we are all innocent creatures living under the blind laws of nature.

But imagine for a moment that the government has been seeding the clouds. The whole weather discourse would then have to shift. As weather sufferers, we could begin to speculate about the designs of power. And our complaints (about the rain, perhaps) would find a legitimate object: the people who, in defiance of the familiar axiom about the weather, were actually attempting to "do something about it." Under these conditions, the conscientious weatherman might assume the role of the political reporter and attempt to uncover the "inside story" on behalf of the audience. For suddenly there would be an "inside" to the weather—beneath the surface where events occur would now be a world in which powerful people trigger events by making phone calls, holding meetings, seeding clouds. The dominant metaphors and rituals of political journalism would now apply: the darkness in which power conceals its purpose versus the light of the public realm, with the no-longer sheepish weatherman—the Bob Woodward of weather!—vowing to expose the deeds of power to publicity's pitiless glare. In short, the weather (and, in turn, the weatherman) would lose its innocence if humans were believed to exert any power over it. To guard against this possibility is part of the function of the weather report on television; lately this task has become more difficult.

In cities like San Diego, Los Angeles, and Denver, where air pollution is a constant and visible problem, the weather report includes a "smog index," which estimates the danger to human health from the air outside. The ideal world of weather trembles with the appearance of smog as a daily item of interest, for smog threatens to introduce an "issue" into a previously issueless realm. It is possible to speak of smog as something that descends upon the city like a warm front, but this does violence to our understanding of the environment. Unlike the weather, smog cannot be seen as an effect without a social cause; it is not a condition of life on the planet, but the consequence of a certain way of life. To include smog as part of the weather report puts pollution down as an act of nature rather than a human deed. Responsibility for the smog appears, and the weatherman becomes an unwitting complice in the rephrasing of his own report and politics as "nature."

The smog index itself has an obvious misleading function: it suggests that the cause of the smog is in fact quite unknown, suggesting that the authorities have

at least somewhat under control. The index is actually a probability statement, a prediction. But unlike the prediction that rain is on the way, a smog-index figure is not the kind of estimate that can be measured against events of the following day. The harm that can be done by breathing dirty air may not show up for years, and even then it will be difficult to isolate from other factors affecting human health. So there is no way to hold the weatherman accountable for the prediction implied by the smog index. No smart-mouthed newscaster will ever say, "Here's Frank with the weather. Listen, Frank, what happened eight years ago? You said it was safe for pregnant women to go out." The mock prosecutions of the weatherman end the moment he participates in the political project of estimating risk—the moment, in other words, when the question of his guilt becomes real.

**T**he innocence of the weather (and the weatherman) has become increasingly difficult to maintain, as human action becomes an increasingly important factor in the condition of the earth's atmosphere. A cloud-seeding scandal may not be a very likely prospect, but as the summer of 1988 reminded us, acid rain, the global warming trend, the depletion of the ozone layer, ocean pollution, deforestation, and, of course, smog are already here. Each threatens to implicate the weather in a complex of social and political problems. If the skies overhead are increasingly influenced by events on the ground, the line between "news" and "weather" becomes harder to draw, and the weather report is less able to maintain its exemption from history, politics, and power. The longest-running joke on television—that the weatherman is to be blamed for a forecast gone awry—will surely be dropped if "blame" for the weather begins to seem like a question of real importance.

It will be interesting to see what television does as the weather loses its innocence. One possibility would be for the newscast to place more and more consequences of the social world under the heading of "nature," which is the direction marked out by the smog index. The comic persona of the weatherman might remain, but it would become increasingly lurid, as various environmental hazards are ticked off in the same casual fashion as "our overnight low." The other possibility, unlikely as it seems, is for the newscast to politicize the weather, perhaps by making the weatherman into some kind of advocate for the Earth. Either way, the happy atmosphere of the weather report will be difficult for television to maintain, for the weather can no longer serve as a haven from history.

[Fable]

## A TAIL

By Wang Zengqi. From *Short, Short Stories*, published by the Literature and Arts Publishing House in Beijing. Wang's story "Small-Hands Chen" appeared in the August 1988 issue of *Harper's Magazine*. "A Tail" was translated from the Chinese by Howard Goldblatt.

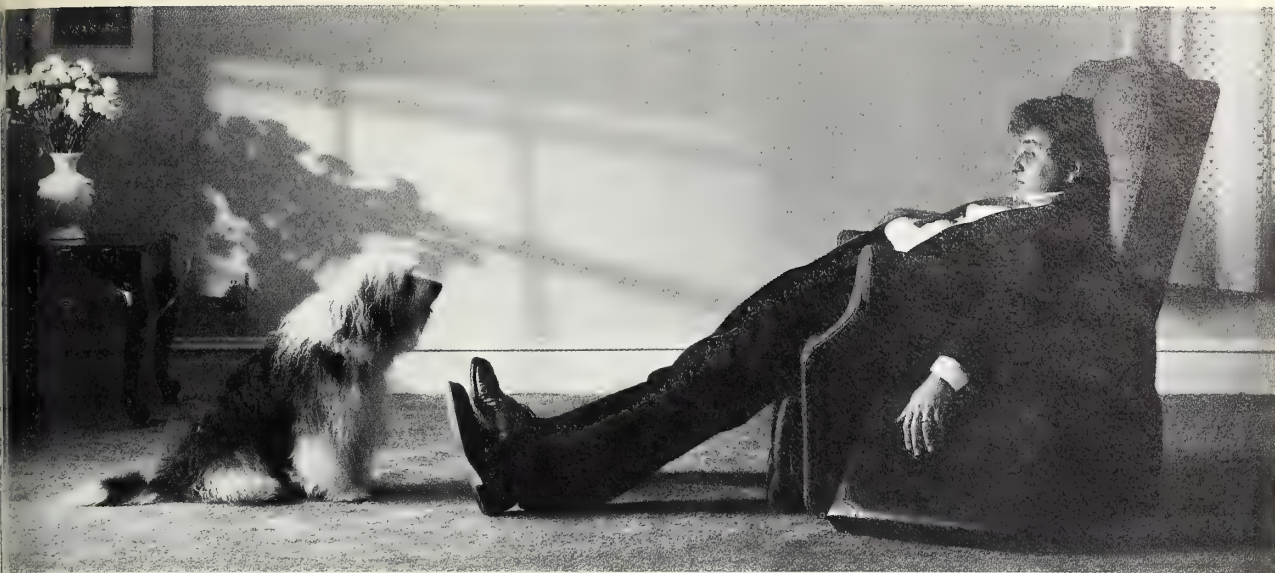
**O**ld Huang, our personnel consultant, was an interesting fellow. The position of personnel consultant did not exist at the factory until he assumed it. He'd worked in personnel so long he knew pretty much everything there was to know about the employees. But over the last couple of years, as age began to overtake him, his health started to fail, and he was always complaining about aches and pains and rising blood pressure. So he asked to become a consultant, and since most of his consultations came in the area of personnel matters, everyone called him the personnel consultant. Although it started out as a nickname, it had a decidedly formal ring to it. He never missed a meeting concerning personnel matters if he could help it. Sometimes at these meetings he spoke up, sometimes he didn't. Some of the people liked what he had to say, some didn't. He was an eclectic reader and an inveterate storyteller. Sometimes he'd tell one of his stories right in the middle of a very serious meeting. This is one of them.

An engineer named Lin was slated to become chief engineer at the factory, but the leaders were anything but unanimous in their decision. Some approved the promotion, some opposed it, and even after a series of meetings the issue remained unresolved. The opinions of those who approved should be obvious, while those of the opposition can be summarized as follows:

1. Bad background: he came from a capitalist family;
2. Unclear social connections: he had a relative living outside the country—a cousin in Taiwan;
3. He was suspected by some of having had rightist tendencies during the Anti-Rightist campaign;
4. He didn't get along particularly well with the masses—his ideas were sometimes too penetrating.

The strongest opposition came from a personnel-section chief by the name of Dong. This particular fellow was very excitable, and every time the issue arose, he made the same unreasonable comment over and over again as his face turned bright red: "An intellectual! Ptui! An intellectual!"





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The personnel consultant listened to him each and every time without taking a stand one way or the other. One day the party secretary asked, "What's your opinion, Huang?" Huang answered in measured tones, "Let me tell you a story—

"Once upon a time there was a man named Aizi. One day Aizi was on a boat that docked alongside a riverbank. In the middle of the night he heard the sound of crying down in the water. He listened carefully. A group of water denizens were crying. 'Why are you crying?' Aizi asked them. 'The Dragon King has given an order,' they said, 'that all animals with tails will be killed. We're crying because we all have tails.' Aizi was greatly moved by their plight. He looked down at each of them and noticed that there was a frog among them. It, too, was crying. Aizi was puzzled. 'Why are you crying?' he asked the frog. 'You don't have a tail.' The frog looked up and said, 'I'm afraid he'll dig up my past as a tadpole!'"

[Poem]

## GRAPHIC WINCES

*From "Graphic Winces," a chain poem written by Allen Ginsberg in collaboration with his students. The poem appears in the 1988 Brooklyn Review, No. 5, an annual journal published at Brooklyn College in New York City.*

In high school when you crack your front tooth  
bending down too fast over the porcelain water  
fountain  
or step hasty onto Hillel Place without looking  
in a Speedy taxi's path—  
or slice baloney quick, a stinging sensation,  
gasp!—blood on a piece of thumb!  
or visit Ward 19N Bellevue your best friend  
wild-eyed on speed talking about having ten  
children  
or raise the tuna sandwich to your open mouth  
and a cockroach tickles your knuckle  
or step off the kitchen Cabinet ladder on the  
ball of your foot hear the piercing meow of a  
soft kitten  
or strike an old man blocking your Crossroads  
way with your sword, marry the woman who  
runs next town & call yourself Clubfoot—  
or put your tongue to a winter-frozen porch  
door, a layer of frightening white flesh sticks  
to the wooden frame—  
or burn your mouth roof on your first bite of  
molten Cheese anchovy pizza  
or pinch your little baby boy's fat neck skin in  
the last teeth of his snowsuit zipper

or dragged into the bathroom stall by Mother  
Superior she blisters the skin of your left thigh  
for the Five Wounds of Jesus with the ciga-  
rette she caught you smoking  
or when you Cross Route 85 the double yellow  
line's painted over a dead possum  
or lights go out screeching between metal  
wheels & delicate curved rails of the subway  
under Grand Central  
or stepping from the shoe store feel the tug of  
hot Wrigley's on the bottom of new tennis  
shoes  
or tip your stale party Budweiser on the window-  
sill to your lips, taste Marlboro butts floating  
top of the can—  
or ambling down Mott St. a bloody pigeon  
crushed by a car wheel raises one wing as if to  
fly in the Wind—  
or fighting on the second flight of the tenement  
push your younger sister down the marble  
stairs she bites her tongue in half, they have  
to sew it back in the hospital—  
or sorting laundry a long hairy bug runs out of  
the pillowcase & up your arm  
or walking in rain E 4th Street & Avenue D,  
appears a dark man out of a doorway and  
opens an umbrella by your ear  
or a car swerving to miss a seagull pecking en-  
trails thru a cracked shell as you lean out the  
window, the turtle raises its head and looks  
back at you  
or at icebox grabbing the half-eaten Nestlé's  
Crunch a sliver of foil sparks on your back  
molar's silver filling  
or the surgeon stitching the gashed fascia under  
your forearm remarks yeah I was in Med  
School in Grenada for the invasion  
or you leave the restroom at the Cloisters with  
the long black rayon dress neatly tucked up  
into your girdle  
or prom nite lindyng at Copacabana the heel  
bends back & cracks off the new white spikes  
your girlfriend insisted you borrow  
or pulling down your pants, sitting on the John  
you idly raise your eyes to the ceiling, a con-  
struction worker waves to you from the floor  
above  
or wiping the bathroom socket cover with a  
damp cloth a current tingles in your left index  
finger & jolts your shoulder blade  
or biting into the core of a red delicious apple  
something small like a worm slithers over  
your tongue and down your throat  
You might grimace, a sharp breath from the  
solar plexus, a chill spreading from shoulder  
blades and down the arms,  
or you may wince, tingling twixt sphincter and  
scrotum a subtle electric discharge.

October 4, 1987



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Navajo Monument Valley Tribal School Near Goulding, Utah, 1985, from an exhibition of photographs of the Navajo and White Mountain Apache reservations, by Skeet McAuley. The exhibition opened last month at the Burden Gallery in New York City and will travel through the United States during the next three years.

[Story]

## UNDER THIS VERY MALL

By Allan Gurganus. This story is adapted from *Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*, a novel, to be published next month by Knopf. Gurganus wrote the story "America Competes," which appeared in the July 1988 issue of *Harper's Magazine*.

**O**dd to be ninety-nine, stuck in a bus parked at this mall and, as usual, waiting for people. Where are the others, child? Probably in Jan's Candles 'n' Things buying potpourri sachets for \$6 apiece. Since you and me are the first ones back, maybe I could tell you what's directly under our blue bus's tires. Beneath the mall and this macadam spread twelve acres for your parking convenience . . . a street once sat, most of a town.

The real kicker: it was my town, honey. Ours, I mean. Many other citizens of then are just as planted as what's underfoot: dear North Church Street. It stretched (lined with permanent-

seeming elms) from us here, over to the Monkey Ward sign and clear against Toys "R" Us, which was the War Memorial.

Courthouse Square was all gaslit that night in 1910 my husband, bearded, solid, fifty, brought me home from our Atlanta honeymoon. The buggy, it was rented and real nice. Two roan geldings pulled us easy as you please right back where we were known to every soul. Four folks waved. "The lovebirds return!" Luke Lucas of Lucas's All-Round Store hoisted his white apron, imitating my bridal gown going up. In 19 and 10, blushes came often as ragweed sneezes. "Quite a line at the water fountain," my husband pointed to hicks in single file around our square. Home meant instant credit. Home meant every park bench was a history of who you'd sat there with and held their hand, and who'd then gone and snitched to your momma who grounded you. Grounded! There's a word for you—at my age and out here in this world of hard sell and tar. Falls, N.C., in 19 and 10 was a minor showplace of its kind, honey. They paved downtown. Smothered it, they did.

Let's go back. You mind?

I know that, as malls go, that one yonder is



okay. It might be owned by the Japanese and some Ohio Yankees, but its fountains feel nice when a little stray mist blows across a person's wheelchair. I like the place best when scruffy hang-around teenagers shoplift detergent from the Drug Emporium then pop the stuff into every fountain and stand back. Soon great swells of bubble glom everywhere, drives management just crazy. Such mischief makes the mall more ours, a mistake and joke nobody can hide.

Reminds me of how, at age twelve, me and my best girlfriend used to climb onto the soldier atop the War Memorial, decorate him with borrowed girdles, one huge red feathered hat. Maybe we didn't have Mohawk hairdos like the mall's girlies now, but we were rounders, okay. We were something.

So, let's go back, you mind? Let's go down. Make it Then. Lift me from this bus. Sweet Chariot me clear of my trusty wheelchair. Swing me low into that clean moving buggy. Let me lean against my old man, us still innocent of everything eventual and sad. Seventy-five degrees, light breeze full of star jasmine and sewage. Ah, the past!

We buggy toward a clearer view of the Greater Downtown area, its fourteen Christian-owned stores plus Eckstein's Finer Apparel and the Chinese Tailor. (He'd be amazed to find his shop flattened under a "complex" owned by three string-pulling gents from Tokyo!)

**C**oming up on our right, it's HARBISON'S BAKED GOODS—FRESH-FRIED DAILY, PLUS DAY-, WEEK-, AND TWO-WEEK-OLD DONUTS FOR THE DISCRIMINATING TASTEBUD.

I think I'll loop back to poor Harbison's last. Next door down, the window simple with one draped dummy: CHINESE TAILOR FOR MEN AND THEIR NICE LADIES (ALL WELCOME)—WONG ("RED," "JAKE WADE," "SHORTSTOP," OR "RICEY-MAN") CHOW—PROP.

A coal-oil lamp burns in back. Hear the busy foot-treadle Singer? It could have hiked him clear home to China by now. He wishes! Bent there, an elf-sized man wearing very round eyeglasses, black hair seamed with a white center part, a fellow mild to the point of appearing terrified full-time.

Red can stitch any garment to fit anybody, perfect. Ballgowns, he sewed the titanic Mercer twins, made them look no worse than statue-sue. A miracle, art! But Wong Chow works just as hard at altering himself to suit our edgy local will. Fifteen years ago, he got off the train nine stops early. Wong had already rented his storefront yonder when he discovered Falls won't Raleigh. (To him, they sounded alike.) Local wits claimed he'd got the Wong station.

They flattered him with local-yokel nicknames meant to help the shy outsider seem more "human." Afraid to offend, Wong accepted all pet names. Called Shortstop, did Wong really know what one was? Local rubes yelled insults, he smiled anyhow. Having shelled out his only cash for rent deposit (not refundable), he stayed put for forty years. Many people do, for reasons much less good. The Chinese invented fire-crackers, and bad boys gave Wong many reasons to feel homesick. Frequent cherry bombs ex-

[Bio]

## MEET BOB BUSSINGER

*From a brochure for Ventana, an inn in Big Sur, California.*

**A**s general manager since 1980, Bob has completed the transition from stockbroker/insurance salesman to raconteur, host, father confessor, enforcer of rules, advertising and marketing manager, and staff motivator.

The transition began in 1969 when Bob was living in Carmel Valley and riding the crest of the stock-market boom of that time. He was also involved with the human potential movement at Esalen Institute in Big Sur. He convinced his wife and three children that his karma was pulling him toward the hospitality business.

On February 3, 1975, Bob was present as a waiter for the opening night of the Ventana restaurant. In the true spirit of the place, everything went right in spite of the problems. "The wind got so strong that it blew over the potted trees on the patio. The lights went out a little later, and we had enough emergency power for only two small lights and the cash register, but everyone was in a jolly mood, and the increased candlelight made it even more romantic."

His day starts around 5:00 A.M., when he can be found swimming laps. He's usually in the office by 6:30 A.M. Breakfast at 8:00 in the lobby, and a full day of interacting with the staff and guests. Frequent meetings as a member of the Chamber of Commerce are usually followed by light dinner, and he still has time for meditation, some poetry writing, and a passion, learning to fly.

Look for Bob on your next visit. He shaved his head in 1975, a move back by popular vote, s

ploded down the chimney of his shop/home. Lots of laughs. "You scare poor Ricey-man," Ricey-man smiled, shaking. Boys said, "Yeah, that was the general idea."

Once when I was a real little girl, I came upon him at sunset. Mr. Chow sat on his back step eating noodles from a bowl, sat stitching these into his mouth via two sticks. Food moved, a steady white lanyard, threading one tailor's mouthy buttonhole. Wong Chow sat unseen, nicknameless, non-smiling, glasses off, blinkish, curled there, staring out at a daisied cow field that is now that yonder, the interchange of U.S. 301 and U.S. 95. He was so alone and just blank. Imagine living forty years away from family and, maybe worse, hidden from your own language. I felt his daydreams to be far-reaching as a Chinese scroll stitched every inch by hand, gift wrapping the world from here clear to his birthplace. He never saw me, never had to smile that smile. I ran home as fearful as if I'd come upon somebody naked, somebody naked and hurt.

Maybe he was fifty-some when he died at his solitary Singer. Must've happened sudden, he stitched a seam across two fingers, joining them to the oldest Lucas girl's white satin wedding dress. Huge funeral Shortstop had. Preacher praised him, "Knew what a day's work meant." Under the shop's floorboard, eight thousand hard-earned dollars was found squirreled. Ignoring foreign addresses among his things, our town council voted: the money should go to keep our public library open longer hours on the weekends forever.

**W**e clatter past WORKS OF BERT. BLACK-SMITH OF CHOICE. BERT—PROP. His two-hundred-pound trade shingle is forged from pure twisty wrought iron. It offers a well-known boast (and true!): IF YOU CAN BREAK IT, BERT CAN FIX IT. IF YOU CAN DESCRIBE IT, BERT CAN MAKE YOU ONE WHILE YOU WAIT IF YOU GOT THAT KIND OF TIME.

Rental horses now pull us under the arching brag of Bert's masterpiece. It's a mammoth sign made after being described by our twelve-member city council. It spans two lanes of traffic—its motto greets shoppers and likely water-fountain users. This major example of the smithie's riveting art will later grace Falls's only postcard. The thing is black iron filigree and its legend cannot be easily read against a nighttime sky.

Bert's fine work has the Eiffel Tower's cross-hatched conviction, Old English lettering cut from heavy-gauge sheet iron. Several letters are now half-blocked by sparrows' beardy nests that, tonight, give our arch a certain Wild-Man-of-Borneo carnivalish look.

Thing says: YOU HAVE JUST ENTERED THE GATEWAY TO THE BREADBASKET OF THE PEANUT BELT! FALLS IS EDUCATIONAL, FALLS IS FUN. FOURTEEN CHRISTIAN-OWNED STORES OFFER FINEST WARES. IT IS US FOR COMMERCE, US FOR CULTURE. GET THE SMARTEST OF WORLD MERCHANDISE, LEAVE YOUR CARES IN FALLS. A DOUBLE-WARM FALLS WELCOME!

Bad children steadily dare each other to spoil the sign, but cleverly. Considering a half-ton of bolts, nuts, and sprockets, you never hoped to remove even one comma that'd surely outlast even Judgment Day's full stop. Instead, us kids would cover certain letters with cardboard. You'd force exposed words to spell what you wanted.

The best such stunt I recall from this hot bus stuck in the present, it eclipsed much of the line: GET THE SMARTEST OF WORLD MERCHANDISE, LEAVE YOUR CARES IN FALLS. It soon read: GET... SMART... LEAVE... FALLS.

I doubt that Mr. da Vinci, after putting final touches on his Mona Lisa, received more backslapping credit in li'l downtown Vinci (Italy) than did our young rascallions the morning after. "How'd it even come to you, Junior?"

"Oh, simple, nothing much. I saw it in a Golden Dream From God, is all. Why?"

The culprits were mildly scolded but not before our mayor admitted, yeah, it'd been a "pretty good one." He honored Sheriff's request to let this instance of hooliganism stay up throughout the weekend. White farmers and black sharecroppers were soon streaming into town and doing the turn-of-the-century equivalent of taking Polaroid pictures: *Looking hard*, then shaking their heads and *looking hard* again.

Boys were famous clear to Monday morning. Weekend business jumped by 15 percent. GET... SMART... LEAVE... FALLS.

When electricity came in later, a natural first downtown project: let's go light Bert's sign with 450 tungsten bulbs! The forward-looking shop teacher who'd rigged the thing climbed overhead for the grand illumination. A good-sized evening crowd gathered. The line around the water bubbler shrunk briefly. Adults stood open-mouthed, practically panting for a suitable Edison-Ford-type display of Future Progress. Oh, how we believed in today's silvery Now whilst sunk back there in that mud Then!

Our metal monument was jungly with primitive wiring, all voices hushed. The trim young manual-arts teacher perched proud there, winking down at his delighted bride who'd hired a photographer out of her own pocket. The teacher signaled, the cameraman aimed, and somebody hit the power switch. Our future-looking citizen (ignorant of how short a fuse said future really has) learned something sudden



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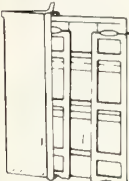


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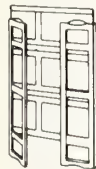
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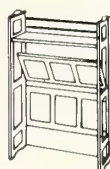
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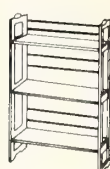
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about the glamorous jeopardy of a coming age. We all discovered that this particular iron made a pure conductor. The teacher was killed— instantly, so I'm told. The photograph, of a molten-rainbow lightning bolt boiling mushroom-shaped above midtown, proved overexposed. WWI lay dead ahead. If we had kept that photo of pure light, pure release and rage . . . we might've learned something urgent: a brochure (historically accurate) for the coming Spectacle. But, child, who ever learns at the time.

**H**arbison's Baked Goods back there—for the discriminating tastebud—that is finally of note because Gurney Harbison, unlucky sod, caught it first, all this.

A member of the town council that commissioned Bert's masterwork and spent Ricey-man Chow's savings, Gurney also served as Superintendent of Sunday School at First Baptist, plus he was a fanatic about his yard. Nice quiet red-headed fellow till things changed and sudden. Harbison had been regular and sentimental as we *were* then: a sucker for kittens, too open-handed with his six sons. To the Lutheran Orphanage, he donated much-craved week-old jelly donuts (their filling beloved for being so cherry-red ruby-red). Foundlings remembered Gurney in hundreds of nightly prayers, powdered sugar dainty upon moving baby lips. Gurney Harbison turned fifty. Some blamed that. Others guessed his slaving over deep-fat frying all those years had battered Gurney's gray matter. For whatever reason: He woke one Monday feeling he must have three bake shops in three *other* towns. He'd been a local grinnish sort of guy, ready with a joke, lazy with news. Now he bought a fast horse and, in all three distant bergs, hired rough overseers to push Harbison's addicting jelly donuts. Every fry shop worked, and soon Harbison had scads more money but piles more woes. He resigned his council seat and—after he missed Sunday School four times running—was asked to let others take over. He cussed the preacher. Rev. remarked how careworn and gray our once-pleasant Gurney looked. Dark countable rings were gathering like franchises under each mother-office eye.

School plays featuring young Harbison boys as pilgrims, bunnies, and the Green Leafy Vegetable Food Group were now attended only by the Missus. Our beloved baker soon jumped at loud noises. He checked his pocket watch a lot. Donut donations to orphanages stopped. Sugar-deprived orphans now prayed for Gurney's doom. He accused lifelong men friends of being jealous over his new bracket, said their small-change problems didn't interest him now. All we could find to say of his sudden hurrys, his

polluted moods: "Maybe Gurney had a real bad temper all along?" "Bet you Gurney'll be his old self in no time." "Gurney needs more love, but Gurney *had* so much, he gave it up." The more he succeeded in sating the discriminating tastebuds of three counties, the less he enjoyed our free and easy present. He never hung around the Courthouse Square with us, sunning, watching hicks make much of the water bubbler. He quit listening. No fun lately, The Jelly Donut King. Then, a final strangeness as, one October afternoon, sipping milk to coat his successfully expanding chain of peptic ulcers, Mr. Gurney Harbison patrolled the curb before his home. Wearing baker's whites, he pressed a pale shoe against walnuts scattered on Harbison-owned sidewalk. For years the neighbor's tree had dropped such nuts across Gurney's curbing. If you've ever cracked black walnuts, child, you know they leave permanent tobacco-colored stains. Gurney'd never mentioned just how much such splotches bothered him. The plump neighbor stood yonder raking his lawn. Gurney called the fellow closer, pointed to the pavement's yellowing, he whispered, hoarse, "Fifteen years of filth from you. I know your plan, and there are limits. You people keep fouling everything I own. This is where your kind gets off and my kind takes charge, you fucking pig." How mad *was* Gurney? From under his starched whites, he whipped forth a brand-new forty-five, the price sticker still gummed, pink, to its muzzle. He instructed his neighbor to clean up these nut stains, and he meant *now*. "What *with*, Gurn?" the gent sensibly asked, smiling, hoping this was April First but knowing this was Autumn. Seeing the business end of a pistol's solemn snout (has there ever been a *witty* gun?), the neighbor chose to fall upon his knees and—with the pistol still watching very close—decided to prove additional good faith by clawing at nuts' markings using his very fingernails. "Lick it up." Gurney's voice was now cut off from everything but itself, his sadness had even lost the community feel of others' sadnesses bordering his. "Said to *lick* your mess up, dog, lap it, you."

The neighbor bent, either weeping or chuckling, he pressed his tongue right onto gritty pavement and—for his trouble—caught a slug just at the base of his skull. He then stained the offending stains with his own mortal losings as Gurney walked directly to the Bank, withdrew a lifetime's savings, and, grabbing two sweet rolls from his downtown shop (raisin, I am told), jumped his fast horse and rode out the east end of town while, at the west, a crowd gathered near one neighbor, dead of what? Killed for what good reason? And nobody understood. 19 and 10.

This, see, was new. ■



# HE'S BACK!!!

**T**he Eighties have witnessed the flowering of the art of publicity. Consider the professionals credited with George Bush's presidential victory: spin doctors, ad makers, speechwriters, gesture coaches, sound-bite writers. Whether it's an executive coping with an industrial accident or a rock star pitching a new album or a lawyer arguing a novel insanity defense, the demands of the modern media require a coterie of image advisers. One wonders how these professionals would manage the Western world's most anticipated reappearance—the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, as predicted in the Book of Revelation.

To examine the current state of the public-relations art, *Harper's Magazine* hired consultants to offer Jesus frank advice on six tasks critical to winning over American public opinion: developing a media strategy, writing a monologue for a guest-host appearance on *Saturday Night Live*, redesigning the cover of the New Testament and writing the jacket-flap copy, designing a contemporary wardrobe, and developing a storyboard for a one-minute television commercial. Equipped with this portfolio, Jesus should be as influential in His Second Coming as He was in His first.

## ■ ADVANCE MEMO ■

**ASSIGNMENT** write a memo outlining the media strategy and schedule for Jesus Christ's tour of the United States. **CONSULTANT** Ron Suskind, formerly an advance man for John Anderson's 1980 presidential campaign and a field director for Charles Robb's 1981 gubernatorial campaign in Virginia, is the editor of Boston Business magazine and teaches journalism at Harvard University.

MEMO: U.S. Tour  
TO: Jesus Christ  
FROM: Ron Suskind, consultant  
and advance director

### INTRODUCTION

Remember rule one—issues divide, images unite. Your visibility is without precedent (stained glass, Shroud of Turin, postcards, etc.) and Your name recognition is second only to Princess Di. But data indicate intense confusion over where You stand on certain unavoidable issues.

According to Your notes, You're here to "judge the living and the dead." My staff and I assume You've already dealt with the dead. So, now it's time to build support among the living. To this end, it would be better to start slow, with smaller issues, and build a mandate—like Your first campaign.

For the first three days, we've planned several miracles of the modest water-to-wine variety that should verify Your authenticity but stop short of conjuring up the divisive flood-and-fire imagery of Armageddon. We want to show a willingness to perform miracles while, at least in the beginning, respecting existing laws of physics. To encourage spontaneity, Your itinerary will note various "miracle opportunities"—miracle ops. We don't want You to become a captive of Your media strategy. These miracles will be opportunities for growth and flexibility. Most importantly, small miracles will serve to lower expectations.

Another immediate problem: overexposure. The papal visit of 1987 illustrated risks of intense early coverage. By day six, John Paul II was buried on the national page of the *New York Times* (next to A.P. digest), overwhelmed by the more skillful media strategies of Oliver North. Thus, we suggest reserve: a half-day itinerary. Each day will have one theme, one media strategy, one meeting with an opinion leader, and one public event. We'll float the miracles as needed. A few hours of rapid-fire stops and at the end of each day board Your jet (Nazarene One), with traveling staff, bound for an undisclosed location. The mystery of Your whereabouts will lend to enthusiasms that "I am in your midst" (Luke 22:27). Interest tends to

build the longer You are missing—as the last 1,959 years clearly indicate.

### DAY ONE

*Theme:* Traditional values.

In reintroducing You, we don't want to create converts so much as tap existing support. To evoke a yearning for simpler days (from A.D. 1 through Eisenhower), it is important to rely on those oft-recited parables. Of course, they'll need to be reworked (boiled to thirty seconds, max), and You should try to moderate judgmental tone—for instance, "The last shall be first, but the middle might also fare nicely." Just a suggestion. The key here is to play upon a millennium of Sunday-school assumptions about Your ability to answer all mankind's questions without stating specific truths that might offend special interests.

*Media Strategy:* Two-minute bio spots aired nationally; prime-time buys will deal with early days, battle with Satan, record of inerrancy.

*Arrival:* 7 A.M., New York. According to the Book, Your arrival schedule is still unclear ("He comes amid the clouds," Revelation 1:7). However, of the three New York-area airports, we suggest La Guardia. (Avoid Newark, where we've tentatively planned to introduce the Antichrist.) We've discussed a grand entrance, but remember our media strategy calls for a modest start with eye to building momentum. Might be better if You fly Eastern—a sign of Your humility. Meet entourage at Ionosphere Club before first press conference. Talking point: "It is I, Jesus... I am the Root and Offspring of David, the Morning Star shining bright" (Revelation 22:16). Strike tone of "happy to be back," including breezy sound bite to emphasize affability: "My flight was on time (pause), a small miracle." Board glass-domed vehicle (Donkey One) for ride to Triborough Bridge.

*Event:* 9 A.M. Walk across East River (miracle would be to swim it) for parade down 116th Street, main thoroughfare of Spanish Harlem; more people, per capita, named for You here than anywhere in America.

*Miracle Op:* Multiplication of loaves; granted, a



reprise, but worked well first time and offers added strength of familiarity.

*Meeting:* 1 P.M. City Hall meeting with Edward Koch, a skeptic, and Mario Cuomo, a syllogist. To Koch: "A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Men do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket. They set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house" (Matthew 5:14-15). To Cuomo: "If anyone wants to rank first, he must remain the last of all and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35). These citations from Scripture (each stressing traditional values) offer a proper mix: suggesting omnipotence yet cryptic enough to keep pundits busy for one news cycle. Afterward, copter to La Guardia. Nazarene One to undisclosed location.

#### DAY TWO

*Theme:* Someone to watch over me.

The concept of a personal God is problematic. The idea that a deity watches 4 billion of us *intimately* is tough. Yet, the sense of a Supreme Being watching over human actions is a crucial proscriptive force that moderates destructive appetites and forms a framework for prayer. A solution is to win over several opinion leaders, as well as the media, with a well-placed proverb, followed by an apropos miracle, indicating that, somehow, You've been closely monitoring the progress of each member of the flock. This is a natural way to build support among undecideds.

*Media Strategy:* Suspend paid-media spots to emphasize free-media press conference in Washington. See below.

*Event:* 3 P.M., Washington. Arrive by Donkey One at north steps of Capitol for press conference with national press corps. Leader of corps is a man named Sam Donaldson, sardonic and versed in human sacrifices. He is trained to ask the question You most wish to avoid. He will try to test and embarrass You, probably with one of those theological chestnuts. Our sources indicate he will ask: "If You are omnipotent, can You create a rock You cannot lift?" Think about it.

*Miracle Op:* This press conference is held outdoors for a reason. Easy miracle ops. Use forces of nature. Heavy rain is too pedestrian. Last year's drought didn't faze anybody. We suggest hail.

*Meeting:* 6 P.M. Talk with prominent televangelists. These guys hold sway over millions and yet are held in contempt by millions more. Have built strong (useful) grass-roots organizations. But there are strings attached. They want top spots in the Kingdom. While they are Your nat-

ural constituency, forging too cozy an alliance could alienate others; however, too harsh a snub could provoke cries of "false prophet." Handle gently. We suggest You attract their support with intimations of apostle appointments. Good luck.

#### DAY THREE

*Theme:* Distancing from Father.

Your Father, our numbers indicate, has very high positives and that causes You some problems. He's considered more of a doer, You more of a talker. He's a deity's deity—wrath, compassion, says what He means, first week in office created cosmos, oceans, continents. Next to that, Your program of forgiveness, repentance, love—albeit widely admired—brings up "wimp factor." Taking a leaf from the George Bush campaign, we suggest the phrase "mistakes were made." It associates You with the good of His programs, while allowing You to show strength and autonomy by criticizing certain acts of the past.

*Media Strategy:* Heavy buys in top markets; ads deal with current array of urban problems (fitting with the theme of "mistakes") and end with presumption that You can lead mankind from the darkness.

*Event:* 7 A.M., Iowa. With live feeds going to morning shows, You stand in wheat field upon earthen mound (Astroturf over low riser, as a precaution) for Mistakes Were Made speech. As per Your request, You will write this one. Still, one sound-bite suggestion: "Yes, the Creator has made some mistakes. But to forgive is human; to err, divine." Shows both humility and humor.

*Miracle Op:* As You know, farmers are history's malcontents. You might tell them that the weather will no longer be arbitrary and call forth a spring shower. But to show You're not soft on farmers, we suggest a short, scorching sun blast, igniting random fires. It's this type of "swift sword" miracle op that has boosted Your Father's favorable ratings. Our work with focus groups indicates that targeted wrath will be well received.

*Meeting:* 11 P.M. Appearance on *Nightline*. Host Ted Koppel doubts everything, yet is expert in Byzantine logic. Our sources suggest two possible guests opposite You: Madalyn Murray O'Hair, a cartoon atheist; and Dave Gribble, folksy professor of theology at Harvard University. Expect some of the Classics: How could God allow the Holocaust? We suggest a standard seminary response: "God per se does not lead us to a greater good." Then per se negative and stress positive. "And it's the

er good that I would rather talk about tonight, Ted." Or go with that line from Archibald MacLerish's play *I.B.*: "If God is God, He is not good, if God is good, He is not God." Expect a curveball conundrum. What were You doing before You created the world? Remember Calvin's best answer: "Building Hell for the curious." Wave off the angels on the head of a pin question, but if pushed to explain the chastity issue, remember Augustine's prayer: "Dear God, give

me chastity and continence, but not yet."

Completion of *Nightline* appearance may mark best time for an image adjustment—an opportunity to assert Your emerging role with grander miracles befitting a Savior. Tracking polls through the first three days will give us data to plan the next three. Of many memos, this is but the first. Second coming. If all goes well, we'll be in Jerusalem by Pentecost. See You sunrise at the Ionosphere Club.

## ■ 'SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE' MONOLOGUE ■

*ASSIGNMENT* Write the opening monologue for Jesus Christ's appearance on Saturday Night Live as guest host. *CONSULTANT* Al Franken is a writer and performer for the show.

CONPARTIC (voice over) Ladies and gentlemen, Jesus Christ of Nazareth!

*(Jesus enters to applause. Very possibly a standing ovation. He walks down the stairway to "home base" and acknowledges the applause.)*

JESUS: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

*(End music. Applause continues. Probably lots of whooping.)*

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

*(Applause stops.)*

Wow! *Saturday Night Live*! You know, I have to admit, I'm a little nervous. I've never really tried to be funny before. The executive producer, Lorne Michaels, gave Me some good advice. He said, "Just go out there, have a good time, and be Yourself. And whatever You do, don't preach!" So don't worry. I'm not going to tell you how to live. After all, we're here to have a good time!

*(More whoops.)*

Now Lorne also told me I shouldn't approach this like a comedian. I mean, let's face it, if I come out here and compete with Steve Martin, I'm going to come out a poor second. He said, don't do jokes like, "I just came down from Heaven and—boy!—are My arms tired." He said people will start thinking, "Oh, here's some old Jew telling jokes." So, the writers wrote me a few jokes, and Lorne said, "Don't worry, nothing's written in stone." I said, "No, no, written in stone, that's Moses." But seriously, I guess the best advice I got was to come out here and show that I have a sense of humor about Myself. You know, do something a little self-deprecating. Which is kind of tough for Me. After all, I am God.

*(Applause, whoops.)*

In fact, that's something I'd like to clear up. I just saw *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which is supposed to explore the question of whether I'm man or God. Can you believe that? Man or God? I'm here, aren't I? Course, I'll tell you one thing, if Mary Magdalene looked like Barbara Hershey, I might have thought twice about this celibacy thing. I mean, the real Mary Magdalene was about four foot two, 135 pounds. And with bad teeth yet. By the way, the censors didn't want Me to do that last joke about Mary Magdalene and celibacy. They said it was sacrilegious. I said, "Hey, I'm Jesus." They said I'd offend a lot of Fundamentalist Christians. Now, I said I didn't want to preach, but I have to tell you I don't really care that much for the Fundamentalists. If anyone's interested, I think the folks that come closest to getting the whole thing right are the Mennonites. And they're not even watching.

But, anyway, we've got a great show for you. I'm in a lot of sketches—the money-changing sketch, the water-to-wine-miracle sketch, and the Last Supper sketch—where I play Myself. But I'm most proud of this diner sketch we're doing, where I play an old man with a Cuban accent. It's a character I do, and I think it shows a little of My range.

And, finally, our big surprise. Tonight's musical guests: Paul, George, and Ringo!

*(Whoops.)*

And who's playing with them? That's right. Me!

*(Whoops.)*

We'll be right back! I love you all!

*(Applause. Fade.)*



## ■ BOOK COVER DESIGN ■



ASSIGNMENT: create a cover image for the mass-market publication of the New Testament. CONSULTANT: Michele Lanci-Altomare, formerly at Simon & Schuster, is a graphic designer for Price/Stern/Sloan Publishers in Los Angeles.

## ■ JACKET FLAP COPY ■

ASSIGNMENT: write the dust-jacket copy for the mass-market publication of the New Testament, to be in with the Second Coming. CONSULTANT: Gerry Howard is an editor at Norton.

Here is Jesus Christ's own story in the immortal words of the New Testament—the first and most overwhelmingly successful book in publishing history.

At the age of thirty Jesus was an obscure Jewish carpenter in a backwater province of the Roman Empire. By His death at age thirty-three from a brutal flogging and crucifixion, He had largely completed His meteoric ascent to the heights of divinity. Since His demise and subsequent Resurrection, Christianity's growth has proceeded unabated and inexorably down through the ages; today, countless millions in every corner of the globe call Him Savior. In an age devoted to the creation and near-worship of

celebrity, His name recognition worldwide is uncontested. To call someone a "Christ figure" confers the highest praise.

Still, who was this man? This question assumes tremendous urgency, on the eve of the Second Coming, an event which is possibly the most significant occurrence in human history. (Perhaps it surpasses all the end of human history, as some would say.) Christ has ever surpassed the New Testament in drama, eloquence, veracity, and influence. In four novellas, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each reach a new level of understanding of Jesus, a breathtaking saga of heavenly order, story of struggles and triumphs, of faith and

betrayal, of suffering and death—and Eternal Life.

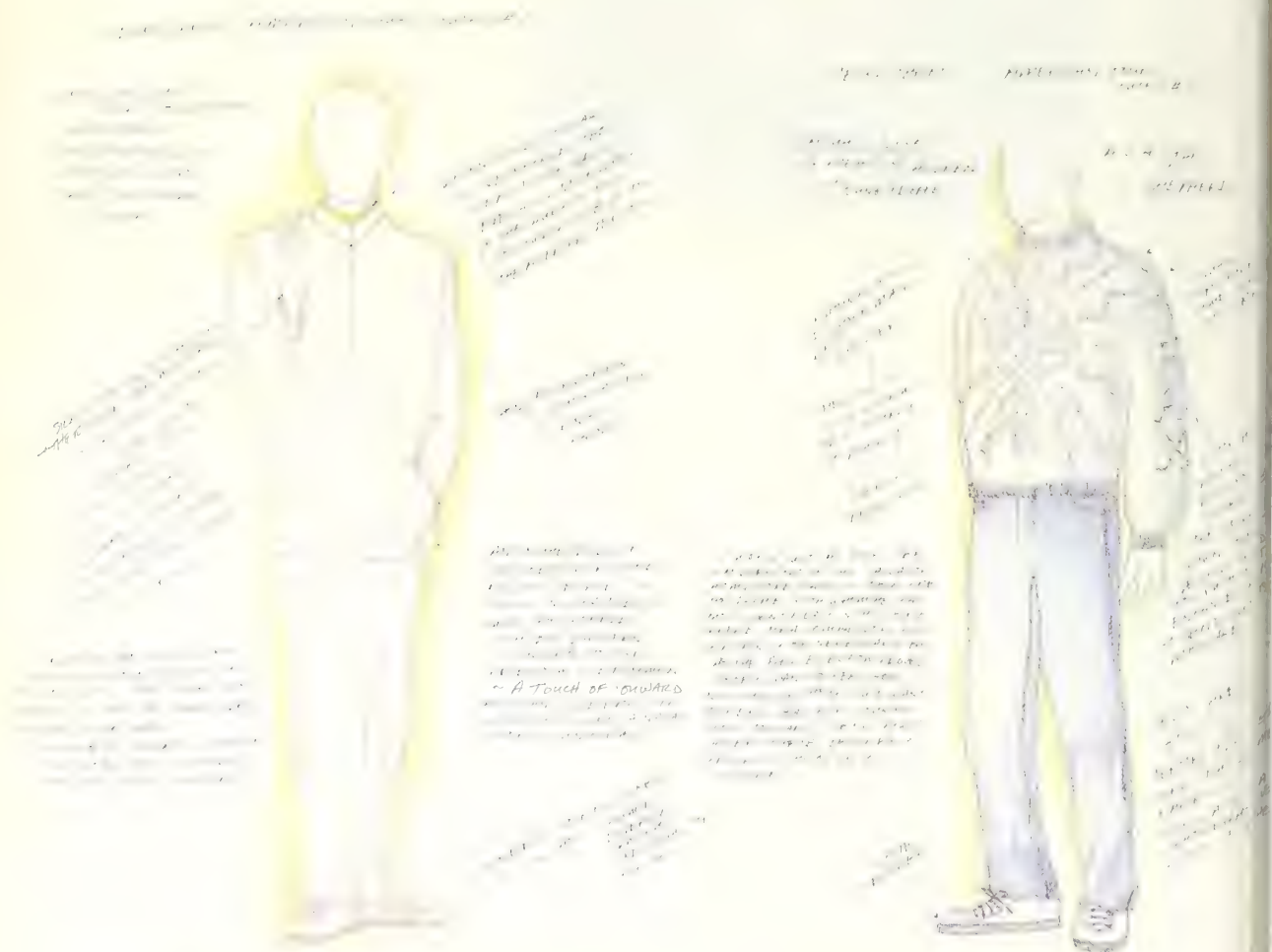
From the start, the life of Jesus was rich in paradox and contradiction. His birth in a manger in the tiny town of Bethlehem could not have been more humble; nonetheless, the very heavens heralded His arrival and kings traveled great distances bearing Him gifts. As He grew, Jesus confounded religious scholars with His precocity, and the stirring eloquence of His sermons and parables led many Israelites to proclaim Him as the Messiah. In the face of persecution He attracted followers of inspiring loyalty, yet, ironically, His closest associates perpetrated His downfall—Judas, who betrayed

Him with a kiss, and Simon Peter, who denied Him thrice. The passion and death of Jesus are unique for their bloody physical violence and searing spiritual suffering, but His supreme sacrifice represents an inspirational victory for all mankind.

The New Testament has rightly been called "The Greatest Story Ever Told." Its riches are inexhaustible; believers and infidels alike can debate its story and message endlessly. As the Last Judgment approaches, there is no better time for readers of all persuasions to reacquire themselves with this timeless book (in point of fact, time is running out). This deluxe commemorative edition is the only version that car-

## ■ FASHION DESIGNS ■

*ASSIGNMENT* design a contemporary wardrobe for Jesus Christ. *CONSULTANT* Adelle Lutz is an actress and costume designer with the New York City firm Todo Mundo, Ltd. She designed the costumes for and acted in David Leland's upcoming movie, *Checking Out*.





ries Christ's personal blessing and is durably bound for many years of use. As gripping as a suspense novel, as gorgeously told as an epic poem, as sweeping as the most lavish miniseries, the New Testament lives—as does Jesus Christ Himself.

The great and famous pay homage to the New Testament:

"Just as my administration is devoted to creating a kinder, gentler America, Jesus Christ is coming to earth to bring us a kinder, gentler eternity—and here is His blueprint from which we can all learn."

—President George Bush

"The great biblical epic of our time—and for all time. I could not put it down or put it out of my mind."

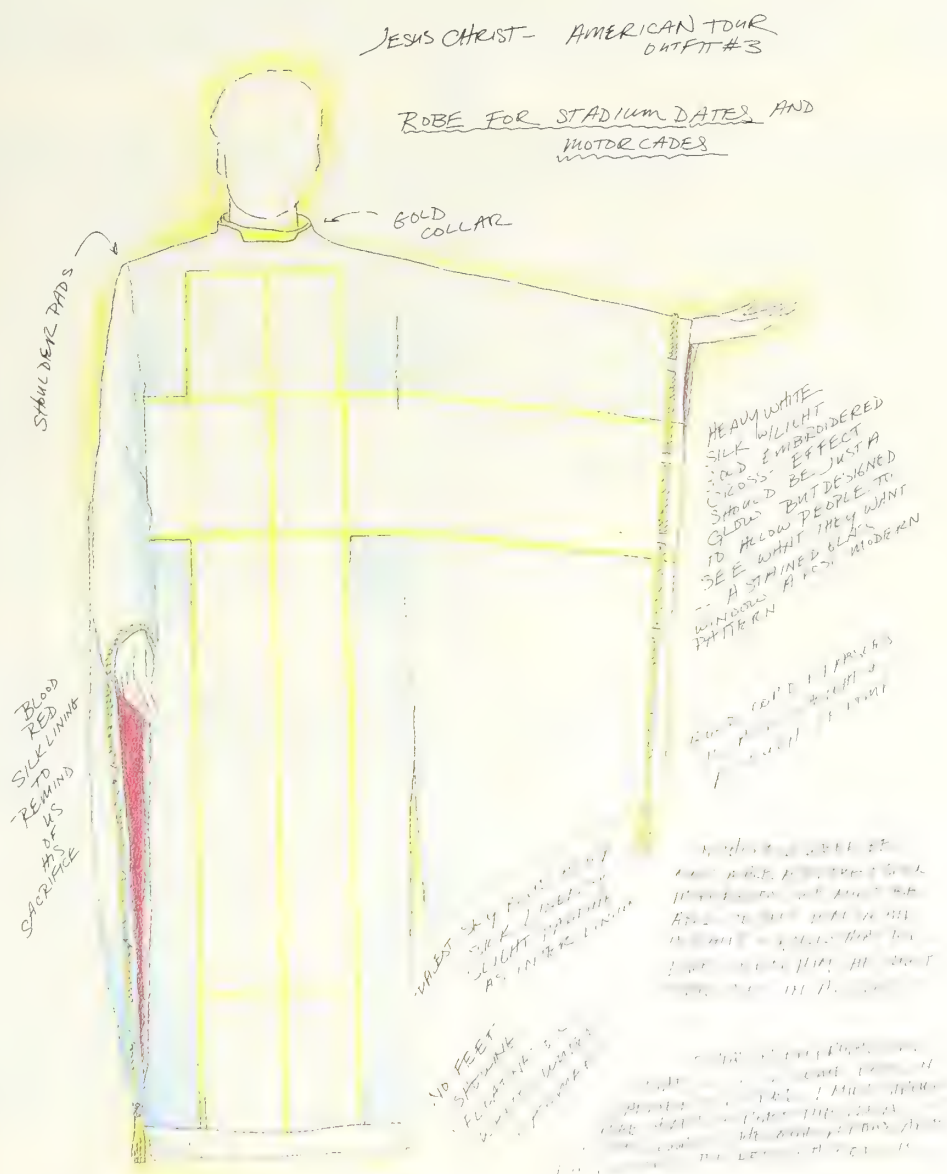
—Pat Conroy

"I salute the real 'Chairman of the Board,' a beautiful human being—if I can put it like that—who has always done things His way."

—Frank Sinatra

"I think of Jesus Christ as my close personal friend, and this book shows why He is regarded as the ultimate mover and shaker. I look forward to working with Him on the problems that beset New York City and the country when He's settled in."

—Donald Trump



## ■ TELEVISION COMMERCIAL ■

ASSIGNMENT develop a storyboard for a one-minute television commercial to announce the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. CONSULTANTS. Phyllis K. Robinson (creative director) is president of her own advertising-



live action, plus electronic special effects. Open on bare feet of supine man on city sidewalk. His feet are finely shaped but dirty.



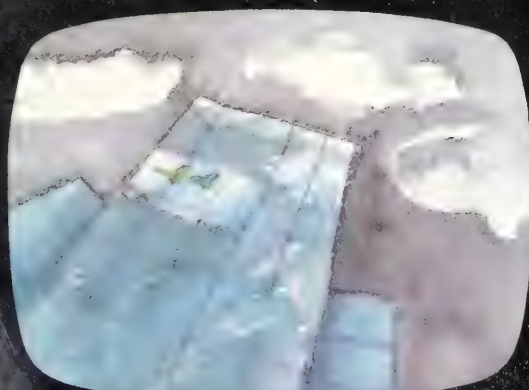
Pan up body to discover a bearded middle-aged figure, partly covered in rags and newspapers, huddling against a building. JESUS CHRIST (VOICE-OVER): You have abandoned your brother.



Blinding flash. In a flutter cut, figure rises, turns into Jesus Christ. He is backlit. His face bathed in a golden glow. Seven stars in right hand (electronic effect). TRUMPET BLAST, IN SYNC WITH LIGHTNING FLASH.



With hand-held camera, move in to medium close-up as Jesus speaks. MUTED TRUMPET UNDER, '60s-TYPE ROCK WITH CONTEMPORARY PERCUSSION. JESUS (VOICE ON CAMERA): You have choked the cities, poisoned the skies--



As Jesus looks skyward, cut to His point of view and show a glittering tower. MUSIC CONTINUES THROUGHOUT. JESUS: --and built monuments to greed.



Cut to medium shot. Fence posts, street lamps turn into golden candlesticks. Well-dressed man crosses street to follow. JESUS: You have prized gold above your children, and wallowed in immorality. You have broken all the Commandments--



\_\_\_\_\_



Cut to long shot, profile, Jesus and His followers.

JESUS: I have come to you before it is too late. He who has an ear, let him hear Me.



The people reach out to one another, hold hands and begin one by one to join in the song.

CHORUS OF MIXED VOICES: There is no place for us.

The vaulted sky grows dark above.



They look at one another and smile and nod and  
fade. Superimpose revealed. From the past, the  
homeless man again. In mouse type, the  
C.H.R.I.S.T. (Committee on His Return to the  
REBEL TO BE, Sublime. We have seen the

CHORUS: No morning star,  
No hope of grace for us.

# THE LIVES OF TEENAGE MOTHERS

Schoolbooks, boyfriends, and babies  
By Elizabeth Marek

**A**t 2:30 on a Thursday afternoon in June, when most teenagers, done with school for the day, are hanging out with their friends, the girls I have come to meet are seated in a small office, reaching for cookies with one hand as they settle their babies on their laps with the other. We are at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center in the Bronx. The center sits at the crossroads of several worlds. The spacious homes of Riverdale dot the rolling green hills to the west, to the south rise the housing projects that cast their shadow on the lower-middle-class single-family homes and the shops which line the blocks closest to the center. The Teen Parenting Program, which provides counseling, education, and health care to teenage parents and soon-to-be parents throughout the Bronx, was started in 1986 with a group of girls from the projects. Once a week the girls in the program, along with their babies and sometimes their boyfriends, crowd into a simply furnished room to drink Coke, munch on snacks, and talk about the difficulties of being a teenage parent.

On this particular Thursday, I have come too. For years I've read about the "problem of teenage parenthood"—children having children. In New York City, teen pregnancies make up 15 percent of all pregnancies and account for more than 13,000 births each year. Sociologists and psychologists speculate about social pressures and individual motivation. President

George Bush, in his inaugural address, spoke of the need to help young women "who are able to become mothers of children they can't afford and might not love."

But despite the concern voiced by others, we've heard very little from the young women themselves. Are they ignorant about birth control, or are they choosing to get pregnant? What are the conditions of loneliness, poverty, and hopelessness in which having a baby might make sense? What happens to these girls and their babies? How does having a baby affect their lives? Where do the fathers fit in?

I've come to Kingsbridge because I want to get to know the mothers, most of whom are much younger than I am. Sophie-Louise, a social worker in charge of the group, introduces me, and the room falls silent. "Well," she laughs, "here we are. Ask away." Looking at the girls, as they tug at a baby's diaper or straighten a barrette, I am not sure where to begin.

"Tell me what it's like, having a baby at your age," I ask at last. As if on cue, all heads turn toward Janelle, a heavyset black girl with short, blown-straight hair, who sits in an overstuffed chair with her three-month-old son, Marc, draped across her lap. The baby, dressed in a pale green sleeper embroidered with a little bunny, is drooling onto her stylish black shirt. She is eating a chocolate cookie and begins to talk about the logistical problems involved in getting to and from high school with an infant. She has just started summer school to make up

*Elizabeth Marek is the author of The Children at Santa Clara, published by Penguin.*

*The names of the young women and their boyfriends and some identifying details have been changed.*



from the classes she missed during her pregnancy. She is seventeen. "I see," she begins. "I get myself up and get the baby up and get myself dressed and get the baby dressed, get my books, get the baby's stroller..." She laughs. "Do you know how hard it is to get a stroller on the bus? The first day of school, I thought I wasn't going to make it."

Newspaper accounts of teen pregnancy tend to focus on girls from welfare families. Janelle, however, is the daughter of a retired postal-clerk and grew up in a small, one-bedroom house in a lower-middle-class neighborhood in the North Bronx. Her childhood was relatively secure: her parents were together and could afford to send her to a Catholic school where she made friends, got good grades, and dreamed about the life she would be when she grew up. "I was gonna finish high school," she says. "Gonna go on to college, like my cousins did. I wanted to get married and have a baby someday, but, really, not now. All I wanted was a high school I never cut school. I hardly was sick even..."

The turning point came when Janelle was fifteen and her parents split. "When my parents split, my family just fell apart. My mother wanted my little sister, so she stayed with her, and then my older sister, too, so it was just me and my mother all alone in the house." Janelle felt unwanted and unloved, so she moved into a room in the basement, and her father took over the upstairs. Sometimes they met at the table, but other times Janelle spent her days without seeing him. "So I started hanging out with a bad bunch of kids," she says, admitting classes—I went through an entire year and only got three credits. And then I got pregnant and dropped out." She laughs bitterly. "Meaning they don't teach you in high school how to get a stroller on the bus."

Lydia, at twenty the mother of a three-year-old, nods sympathetically. She is a pretty, young Hispanic woman with long hair pulled back from her face in a ponytail. Three weeks after she had graduated from high school, having gone to classes in the evening and worked the day as a cashier in a small store in Manhattan. Her daughter, Danielle, a small child with blonde hair and a dirty face, walks around the edge of the room. There is little interaction between mother and daughter. They neither look at nor speak to each other.

Lynda's family, like Janelle's, could be classified as lower middle class. Unlike Janelle's, Lynda's parents are strict Roman Catholics. On the day Lynda told her father that she was pregnant, he left home. "I guess it was either that or throw me out," she says. A few months later he moved back, but even now, although he allows her to live at home, she feels that he has not forgiven her. Lynda believes that her father, having worked hard to provide the best for her and her siblings, took her pregnancy as a slap in the face.

Leaning back in the circle of her boyfriend's arms, Lynda's large black eyes are ringed with

*'My father blamed my mother—  
'If you had brought her up right, this wouldn't have happened''*



dark circles. "My mother still talked to me, like, at the table, pass the salt and stuff. I think my father blamed her—'If you had brought her up right, this wouldn't have happened.'"

Janelle nods. "My father blamed my mother, too. I don't understand that, though, because he didn't even know that I was pregnant. Now he thinks it's my fault that he didn't know, and I think it's his fault. He was always telling me to stay downstairs, and we never talked. We never did anything. Now all he does is compare me to his sister's children, who are much older. They got jobs, finished college, and he says, 'Look at me look so bad, having babies, dropping out of school. But he didn't want to come home. My mother, he didn't want to try to help me. It's all just, 'Don't make me look bad. Don't make me look bad.'"

"So what did he do when he found out about

*Part of the  
motivation for  
teenage girls to  
have babies  
may be a wish  
to be reborn  
themselves*

were pregnant?" asks Lynda.

"He never found out! Not until I came home from the hospital. He found out when the baby was a week old."

Lynda's boyfriend, Tony, a construction worker in his early thirties, joins the discussion. "Maybe it's more that he didn't want to know. He wanted to keep it from himself." Tony is not Danielle's father, although he too was a teenage parent and has two boys of his own. He and Lynda have been going out for almost a year. "You know the parents, they blame themselves," he says. "Like maybe they did something wrong with your upbringing."

Janelle lets out her breath in a snort. "Yeah, well now he tells all his friends, 'She's so sneaky.' But I think that if he was really interested, he would have known. I mean, the last day, the day that I gave birth, he went out to the store and said, 'I'll be right back.' And I said, 'Fine, but I won't be here.' But he didn't hear me."

Later, riding home on the subway, I wonder whether, in part, Janelle got pregnant to get her father's attention. Or, perhaps, as one social worker I spoke with earlier suggested, part of the motivation for teenage girls to have babies is a wish to be reborn themselves, to re-create themselves as children, so they can get the love and attention they feel they were denied.

Nine girls, their babies, and a few of their boyfriends are officially enrolled in Sophie-Louise's group, but since the school year ended, only Janelle and Lynda have been coming regularly. The others, Sophie-Louise explains, have drifted away—to the beach, to parties—or are staying home, too overwhelmed by their lives as mothers to make the trip to the center. Janelle and Lynda represent what Sophie-Louise calls the "cream of the crop": the only ones able to structure their lives sufficiently to attend a regular weekly meeting. The others fade in and out.

At the next meeting, I notice that Lynda's boyfriend is missing. Sophie-Louise explains to me privately that Tony and Lynda have been having problems lately. Two new people are present, however: Janelle's boyfriend, Eron, and a new girl, April, a sad-looking black teenager, who brings her five-month-old daughter. April is thin, her ribs jut out below the orange halter top she wears. In contrast to the Calvin Klein jeans Lynda wears, April's jeans are frayed and stained. She sits with her shoulders hunched, as though shielding herself from the vagaries of life. Glancing up, she notices my tape recorder on the table, and she stares at me for a moment before busying herself with the baby on her lap. The baby's dark eyes flicker across her moth-

er's face, but neither of them registers a glance. Sophie-Louise has told me a few facts about April's life: She is the oldest child and lives with her mother, her two siblings, and her baby in a two-room apartment in a housing project in the East Bronx. Seemingly the least equipped to care for an infant, April appears to have been the most determined to have a baby: Kisha was the result of her third pregnancy, the other two having ended in abortions.

As the meeting starts, Janelle reaches across the table with one hand to grab some chips, while her other hand effortlessly picks up baby Marc in a sitting position on her lap. April, sitting alone at the far end of the table, shakes off Sophie-Louise's offer of a Coke and grabbing a handful of Cheez Doodles, drapes a towel over her shoulder so that Kisha can nurse quietly at her breast. April seems to hover on the periphery of the discussion, offering tentative comments or staring fixedly at a spot on the wall. Sophie-Louise finds some rubber cars for Danielle to play with, but the little girl is more interested in building towers of checkers in a corner and knocking them down with excited squeals. Over the din, I ask the girls whether they had planned their pregnancies, and they all say they felt when they discovered they were pregnant.

As usual, Janelle begins. "At first, you know, I was real scared. I didn't want to have a baby," she says, smoothing her hand over Marc's diaper. "I was dead set against it. You know, I'm just seventeen, and I didn't want to have a baby. I wanted to still go out and have fun with my friends and stuff. But now you know, it's been three months, and I'm used to it." She pauses. "Of course, I haven't had much time to myself. Just twice, in the last three months. I counted it. Twice. The father barely took care of him for a whole day. I can't believe it. I was outside and everything and it was so much fun. But I like being a mom now. I can handle it. All my friends keep telling me, 'Janelle, you're in a closet!' But I'm not in a closet. And if I am, well, they should leave me alone. It's fun in this closet now that I know what doing and everything."

Lynda's mother takes care of Danielle on the day, when she is at work, and again on the evenings, when she attends classes. But Lynda also complains about a lack of freedom. "My mom says, 'Now you are a mother, you have responsibilities.' She will babysit when I go to work or to school, but otherwise, anywhere I go, Danielle goes."

"Did either of you ever think about having an abortion?" I ask.

"Abortion," muses Janelle. "Well, you know, the time I knew I was pregnant, I was already



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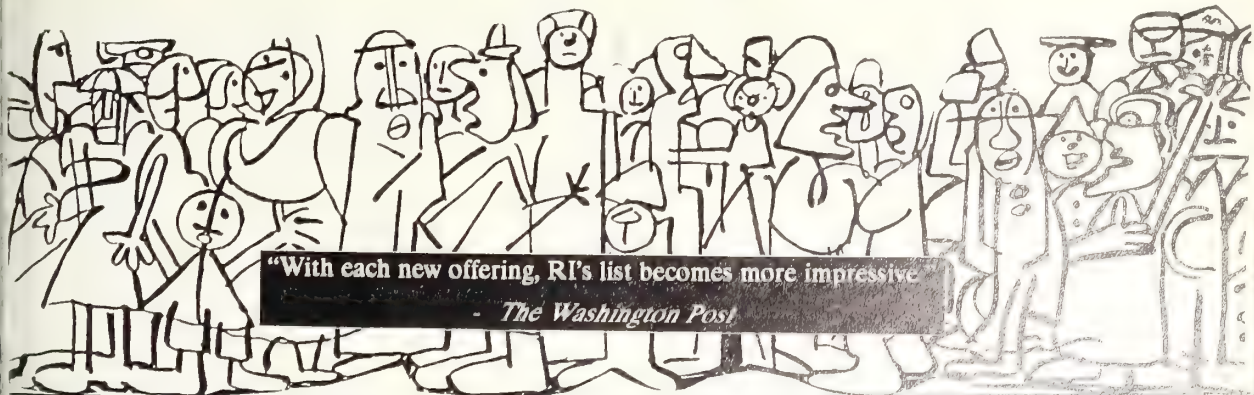
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*'Now she's  
two and a  
half years old  
and all he ever  
gave her was  
a big box  
of Pampers...'*

months pregnant."

I wonder whether she has misspoken. Surely she can't mean that she had a baby growing inside her for six months before she was aware of its presence. But, shaking her head, she assures me that it was six months.

"Before that, I had no idea," she says.

Lynda backs her up. "By the time I knew I was pregnant, I was five months."

"Maybe," Sophie-Louise says, "it goes back to what we talked about before. Not knowing because you really didn't want to know."

Lynda is adamant. "No. There was no way I could know. I still had my regular monthly period until I was five months, and that's when I found out. And by then I didn't have much choice because they told me they only did abortions until twelve weeks, and I was way past that. And besides, I don't believe in doing abortions at five months. They say that at three months the baby is still not really formed into a baby, but after that the baby starts forming, and then I feel that it's killing..."

April reaches down to straighten Kisha's dress. She speaks for the first time, her voice so soft and low that the rest of us have to strain to hear her. "I didn't know I was pregnant until I was three months. I jumped in a pool and felt something move inside me, and that's when I knew." She pulls her daughter to a sitting position on her lap, pushing a Cheez Doodle into the baby's flaccid mouth.

Janelle pauses and then says quietly, "I don't think I knew, but then I wonder. Maybe somewhere in me I knew, but it was like I was saying, no, I'm not pregnant, I'm not pregnant... I was living day-to-day, one day at a time. I would just get up in the morning and do what I needed to do, and not think about it."

As the girls speak, their words reflect their sense of powerlessness. Even their bodies rebel, growing alien creatures without their knowledge, the awareness of their pregnancy dawning only after the possibility for abortion has passed. Does this reflect a yearning for a child? Or is it only a child's way of coping with something too terrifying to acknowledge?

Lynda glances at Danielle, who is still amusing herself with the checkers. She brings the group back to the abortion question. "I think that the girl should just make up her own mind, and then that's it," she says. "Because even if you don't let your boyfriend go, you are still going to get left."

"What do you mean?" Sophie-Louise asks. Like many working mothers, Lynda has an air of perpetual exhaustion. "Sometimes, if you're in love with a guy, and 'I love you' comes up, that's the one thing that always makes you weak. You say, 'Oh, I love you too.' But then it's time for

you both to sit down and talk about the situation, you know, after you say, 'Well, I'm pregnant,' and he says, 'Oh, you are?' and he's happy and everything. This happened to me. And I said, 'I want an abortion.' Then the brainwash would begin, the 'I love you and our baby and I'll give you support.' It was like I had an abortion, then I didn't love him. It's that the woman should just make up her own mind, make her own decision. But he said 'I love you, and I'll do this for you, I'll do this for you, and our baby will have this, and our baby will have that.' Now she's two and a half years old, and all he ever got her was a big box of Pampers and socks and T-shirts and \$200—that was it." Suddenly, the resentment in her voice changes to wistfulness. "She's two and a half. And he was going to buy her a baby and a bassinet and clothes. Everything."

I have heard stories like this from other girls I talked with and from social workers as well. A fifteen-year-old mother told me that her boyfriend said that if she really loved him, she would have his baby. Despite her mother's warning, she decided against having an abortion. But by the time the baby was born, she and her boyfriend had broken up, and he was expecting another child by another girl in her school. Sophie-Louise puts it, the guys like to have three or four "pots on different stoves" at the same time—visible proof of their virility.

Sophie-Louise turns to Eron, Janelle's boyfriend. He is seventeen and works two jobs: one in a garage and the other as an attendant at Playland. She asks him how he felt when he found out that Janelle was pregnant. He looks at her and says, "I was scared."

"More scared than me!" Janelle adds. "I mean, you were chicken!" "Well my life was changing, too," says Eron. "I mean, I know who just say, oh no, a baby, and then you're scared, but I'm not that type of person. My father was never there for me when I was little, so I know, I don't want that to happen to me. I don't want him to grow up and hate me because of that. I want to have somebody to love me, and if me and Janelle don't end up together, I want him to remind me of her."

It interests me that Eron wants the baby to be someone to love him. When I ask the girls what they think of this, April rejoins the discussion. Without raising her eyes from her baby, she says, "When my boyfriend found out I was pregnant, he just played it off. He would play at my stomach, sort of punch me on the stomach."

"Now I don't even let him see her and he wants to do is play with her, and then he give her back when it's time for changing."

"That's tough," Sophie-Louise says. "It's



to make a baby, but then one of the two  
 't want any of the responsibility. Do you  
 you can talk to him about it?"  
 don't want to," April says. "I don't even  
 him to see her. Ever since I was pregnant,  
 ot saying that he was going to get me some  
 He lied to his mother, saying that he was  
 to get me a carriage for the baby, but he  
 get me nothing. I had to do it all. And  
 found out that he had some kind of drug  
 , some girl in his house, some Puerto Ri-  
 rl, and his mother went on vacation and  
 me back and seen all these suitcases in her  
 and she seen this Puerto Rican girl in the  
 with him. They just did it, right there."  
 she clutches Kisha to her breast, I see how  
 ed they are in each other. With no job,  
 yfriend, nothing to fill her days, the baby  
 life. Yet both mother and daughter seem  
 d.  
 elle looks concerned. "But aren't you wor-  
 at she might grow up without having a  
 nship with her father?"  
 ell, I don't even want to see her father  
 ore," April says. "Her father is crazy! He  
 my window one time. I tell you about  
 He wanted to see the baby so bad and he  
 unk one night, four-thirty in the morn-  
 nd he came banging on my door, saying,  
 ot going nowhere until I see my baby.' So  
 brought the baby into my mother's room,  
 e he had cracked the window with a rock  
 was making a lot of noise. And then he  
 ft . . . Besides, I don't want him taking  
 his house, 'cause his mother is a crack-

il falls silent. Sophie-Louise asks her  
 er her role in her own family has changed  
 he got pregnant.

he yeah," April says. "Now, my mother  
 that I have to do everything. You know,  
 was pregnant, she tried to make me do  
 han I was supposed to, more than I did  
 I was pregnant. Now she says, 'You're no  
 teenager. You're an adult.' But before  
 efore I had the baby, I wasn't classified as  
 no adult. So what makes us having a  
 baby be an adult?"

uring the next session, the last before the  
 recess, there is a small "graduation" par-  
 ron. He feels confident about passing his  
 r-school course, and when he does, he  
 ficially become a high-school graduate.  
 ne cake is cut and the group settles down,  
 k turns to peer pressure. Sophie-Louise  
 n telling the story of a fourteen-year-old  
 e counseled at a local high school. Al-  
 the girl had been taught about birth  
 and abortion and warned about the dif-

ficulties facing teen mothers, she became preg-  
 nant midway through eighth grade. Speaking  
 with the girl later, Sophie-Louise asked her  
 why, after all they had talked about, had she let  
 this happen. "I don't know," she said. "All my  
 friends have babies. I was beginning to wonder  
 what was wrong with me that I didn't have one  
 too."

The girls in the group laugh at the story. "I  
 don't know about her," Janelle says, "but I knew  
 that seventeen was too young to have a baby.  
 None of my friends have babies. My sister, she  
 just had a baby . . . but it wasn't like I wanted to  
 get pregnant."

"Were you using birth control?" I ask.

Janelle's cheeks flush.

"I gotta tell you," she says. "I never used birth  
 control. I mean, now I do, but before, well, I  
 just never thought I would get pregnant. I was  
 like, that can't happen to me. I thought that  
 only happened to the bad girls across town.  
 Who do drugs and stuff. But I didn't do none of  
 that, so I thought I was safe. You know, like  
 when you think it just can't happen to you. To  
 other people yes, but not to you."

"I can believe that," Lynda says. "Like, I used  
 to think that if the guy didn't come in you, then  
 you couldn't get pregnant."

"Well," says Janelle, "my friend told me once  
 that if you took a bath afterward, then you were  
 safe."

"Or if you do it standing up!"

I could add to the list. A social worker I spoke  
 with said that most of the girls use the chance  
 method. And each month that they don't get  
 pregnant reinforces their belief that they are  
 safe.

The existence of these myths may reflect de-  
 nial rather than ignorance. As the girls talk, I  
 begin to see why the idea of having a baby might  
 be compelling. There is a sense of loneliness  
 eased, of purpose granted, of a glimmering of  
 hope.

Janelle smiles. "But now that I am a mother, I  
 do enjoy it. I mean, he keeps me company all  
 the time, so I never have to be bored or lonely.  
 He's my friend, this little guy. He keeps me so  
 busy that I never have time to get into trouble.  
 And before, I never really had a reason to get up  
 in the morning, to go to school, whatever. But  
 now, because of him, I do."

In Janelle's words, I hear the unspoken wish  
 that, through the baby, the mothers may get  
 a second chance at childhood, that in having  
 their babies they may almost be living  
 themselves.

Sophie-Louise asks whether, perhaps, Janelle  
 had some of those thoughts before get-  
 tant, whether on some level part of the reason  
 that she did not use birth control was because

*'He keeps me  
 company all  
 the time, so I  
 never have to  
 be bored or  
 lonely. He's my  
 friend, this  
 little guy'*

'All this talk about if it was an accident is a waste of time. We have the baby. The question is, what are we going to do now?'

somewhere inside her she wished for a baby.

Janelle pauses to consider the question. "Well, I don't know. Maybe. You know, I was lonely. My parents had split, and I really didn't have anyone, just me and my father together in the house."

Sophie-Louise turns to April. Despite the fact that Kisha was the result of her third pregnancy, April is unwilling to admit that she had wanted the baby. "It was an accident," she insists. "I mean, I said that this isn't going to happen to me. I was using all kinds of protection. Most times I even had him use protection."

Sophie-Louise seems surprised. "You were using protection?" she asks. "What kind?"

Indignantly, April answers, "Well, I was taking the pill. I mean, I wasn't taking it all the time, but I was taking it. But I missed a couple of days, I guess. I think I took it on the day before my birthday, but not on my birthday, I don't think..."

"So for you it really was an accident," I say. I am surprised when she contradicts me.

"No. I wouldn't really say it was an accident. See, all the other times I got pregnant, my mother made me get rid of it. So I guess part of it was revenge against my mother, like I was gonna get pregnant but not let her know until she couldn't do nothing."

"Not with me," says Lynda. "With me it was just a pure accident. Just a pure accident. I wanted to get an abortion. I said that I was going to have one. But my boyfriend and my parents, my father especially... they wanted me to have it. That's when the brainwash began."

It occurs to me that I've been looking for a motivation, a reason why these girls, and others like them, might *choose* to become pregnant. But the more I listen, the more I wonder whether the question of choice is relevant. In all their stories, I hear again and again how little volition these girls feel they have, how little control over the events of their lives. The deadline for school admission passes and April shrugs. Sophie-Louise makes an appointment for Lynda with a job counselor, but Lynda forgets to go. Janelle knows about birth control but doesn't believe "it" will happen to her. Sophie-Louise told me once that these girls exert no more control over their lives than a "leaf falling from a tree." Perhaps having a baby is less a question of ignorance or choice than one of inevitability. Once a girl is sexually active, it is not *having* a baby that requires choice and conscious action, but *not having* one.

Eron shifts in his chair. "You know, all this talk about we didn't want to have the baby, or it was an accident, or whatever... I just think it's a waste of time. I mean, now we have the baby. The question is, what are we going to do now?"

Sophie-Louise asks him what he means and he explains that the cycle of babies having babies, single parents raising single parents, haunted him as it has haunted most of the others in the room, and that he feels it can end for them, but only if they are willing to face the realities of their situation. "My father was there when I was little," he says, "but I don't want that to happen to my son. I don't want him to grow up and hate me and all that. That's why I'm going to finish school and do whatever I need to do."

His eyes shine as he speaks of his ambition, but he looks down shyly, as if afraid that someone will mock him. Janelle, however, picks him up with pride and speaks of her own intention to become a social worker. "It's so easy to go on welfare," she says. "You just sit home and cash a check. But I'm not going to get on welfare, 'cause it makes you lazy. It's addictive."

"I couldn't do that," Eron says. "I'm thinking of a person who needs to work." But then the realities of fatherhood seem to descend upon him. "I don't know, though. See, 'cause with a baby it takes all the money that you don't even have..."

At the end of the session, the discussion comes back to the problems that the girls will encounter when they return to school in the fall. Janelle is telling April that summer school wasn't so bad. "It was hard leaving him alone," she says, "but I tried not to think about it. And I didn't think about it, because the classes were hard. And I was usually really tired. But I was happy. I just thought about the work, and time flew by, and I was picking up the baby before I knew it."

Sophie-Louise presses April to consider how she will feel when she is separated from her daughter for the first time. "Have you thought at all about what it's going to be like?" Sophie-Louise asks. "How it's going to feel, emotionally, to be separated?"

April ignores her at first, and then shakes her head no. Sophie-Louise encourages her, suggesting she might feel relief or worry or sadness, but April clearly does not want to pursue the issue. Finally, in frustration, April says, "I haven't thought about it yet. I haven't thought about it because it hasn't happened."

With that, the session ends. Having missed the deadline for entrance to summer school, April stays behind to talk to Sophie-Louise about starting a diploma-oriented class in the fall. Danielle tugs at Lynda's arm, asking whether they can finally go to the zoo as she promised. I hear Eron and Janelle bickering about the turn it is to buy diapers. And I head down the steep hill to the subway that will take me into downtown.



# Old McDonald had a...



# ...nightmare.

is an American tragedy. Family farms are being driven out of business by huge factory farms. And that's not just bad for farmers.

This year in the United States over 800,000 people will suffer *salmonella* food poisoning due to antibiotics in farm animals. The poultry industry admits that over one-third of the chickens that reach the market are contaminated. Veal and other factory farm products have been shown to contain not only *monella*, but also a wide range of toxic drug residue.

If of all the antibiotics sold in the U.S. are now fed to farm animals. This dangerous and irresponsible practice accounts for over \$250 million each year for the big drug companies. Factory farms use antibiotics to speed growth and counter the disease-ridden conditions in which they confine farm animals.

Unlike the barnyard images evoked by childhood memories, millions of today's farm animals are forced to live in cages or crates barely larger than their own bodies. Unable

to walk, or even turn around, the victims of factory farming exist in a relentless state of sickness and distress.

By depriving farm animals of exercise, fresh air, and wholesome food, factory farms are a breeding ground for disease. To keep the animals alive under such torturous conditions, they are *continually given drugs which are passed on to consumers.*

**It doesn't have to be this way. And with your help, it won't be. Please join us.**

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**YES!** Factory farms must be stopped from misusing drugs, abusing farm animals, and destroying America's family farms. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

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A free Consumer Alert pack is available upon request.

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# BACKDAIRE

By Fae Myenne Ng

**M**ah left early to get her hair electrified at Duckie's mom's. On her way out she tapped on my door. "Get up Leila!" she said. "Leon's coming home today. Clear a space in the bathroom. And vacuum! Don't forget under the couch." The door clicked shut. Like the journeys of the eight holy immortals, Leon Leong's comings and goings ordered Mah's life.

Leon's work as a merchant seaman was a good thing because it kept him away for months at a time. She learned from experience; my father was a wolf. He married her quickly and just as quickly he left her. Now she thought it was better to let a man into her life slowly.

Leon Leong was her second husband, the one she married for the green card. It was no secret; even Leon knew that was why she said yes. He didn't care; he knew his card was good forever.

This voyage was special; the S.S. *Independent* docked two days in Melbourne and Leon had planned to look up the father I'd never seen: Lyman Foo. This time I was as nervous as Mah was about Leon's return.

My boyfriend and I were still in bed. I listened to Mah's footsteps going down the rickety steps below our apartment window, then rolled over and hugged Mason; there was a faint metal smell in his hair. Mason is a mechanic—a really good one—foreign cars only.

"Huh?" Mason stirred. "What?"

Mason doesn't speak Chinese, so I translated.

*Fae Myenne Ng is at work on a novel. This is her first short story to appear in a national magazine. She lives in San Francisco.*

"She just gave me a list of things to do, getting ready-for-Leon stuff." Then I whispered, "She said not to sleep the morning away from you."

"Nah." He gave a laugh. "She likes me now. I can tell."

At first, Mah didn't like Mason staying over, so I made him leave in the middle of the night. He was working on the Karmann Ghia then, and it made such a racket starting up that he finally gave in. She said, "Better for the neighbors to see the car in the morning and work than for them to look out the window in the middle of the night and know."

The first time Mason came over, I waited for him downstairs. It was night and the street light on Pacific poured a sliver of light into Sal's Alley. His white car glistened, clean as the side of a cut turnip.

There's an old, blue sign at the bottom of the steps: #2-4-6 UPDAIRE. You can't miss it, and it was the first thing Mason saw. He pointed at the sign with his chin. Then he threw his head back and laughed.

"D-A-I-R-E?" He looked at me and laughed again.

I shrugged. So? I thought. It was my address. It was home, where I lived.

Mason is my first born-here boyfriend. Others were all born-theres, like me. I didn't feel comfortable outside of Chinatown; they didn't even much like doing things outside the family. Mason works in the Mission, and he takes me out to eat there sometimes. He knows what to order; his last girlfriend was Mexican.



likes to ski and we go to Tahoe as much as we can. He doesn't care if he's the only Chinese guy on the expert runs; he knows he's good at them. What surprises me is that he never complains. "It's too Chinesey," he says. There's something about him though; he says stuff in that half-cracked tone.

When we were getting to know each other, I thought we did things on our own, so I didn't tell him about his family. But then I started to wonder, didn't they care about him? Didn't he like me enough to introduce me to them?

I asked Mimi Fang, and she told me what she knew. "Real messed-up family, one sister married to a white guy and another overdosed on Quaaludes," Mason said now, nudging me. "Looks like he's in a good mood today, maybe you should tell her, huh?"

Mason was moving into his own place in the city, and he wanted me to move in with him. I wanted to, but I didn't know how Mah would take it.

"Maybe," I said. I didn't know how to tell him. One thing I liked about Mason: he said what he meant. I mean, I thought about a lot of things, but I never actually said them. Out loud. I was away from him, gave a kick under the table to show my irritation.

"It won't take too long, that's all," he said. I knew why I was putting it off; I was waiting for him to go home. I expected him to bring back something from this meeting with my father—a picture, an expression—something that would unlock me from Mah, this alley, this town.

"It won't help it, I just feel like I owe her. It's just been just me and her."

Mason's voice was soft. "Lei, she's got Leon now."

When I was seven, Mah took me out for lunch and told me about Leon Leong. "He'll make a suitable husband," she said. "He's got his papers; two, he works at sea. I'll be away a lot. It'll be just you and me. Like that, we won't have to work so hard. We can take it easy, and it'll be just like the Hong Kong way."

"*Fun!* Shrimp, pork, beef!" The waitress laid out the items on her cart in a bored way. Mah waved the waitress down and took a plate of shrimp and beef.

I wasn't surprised about Leon Leong. I knew he was looking for a husband. Jimmy Lowe, the foreman at the factory, brought her breakfast every day.

There was Tex, the day manager at Silberman's, and Stephen, with his own electronics company. After Leon, Mah liked Victor, the foreman, second best—he was a spender, a talker. Money is a good thing, Mah

said, but so is a pretty mouth and a heady compliment.

"Why him?" I said.

"He asked me." Mah cut a piece of *fuun* with her chopsticks. "What do you think?"

I poured soy over my *fuun*, swirled it around on my plate, then put the whole sloppy piece in my mouth. I'd seen him only a few times, so I didn't know what to say. I chewed. "Well," I said, "he's kinda bald up there."

Mah laughed. "You know the saying, 'Ten bald men and nine are rich.'"

Mah and Leon were married in Reno. I was their witness. Leon's cousin Alvin was service manager at Harrah's and booked the Pink Room at a discount. Mah finished our dresses the night before. Pink lace over pink satin, a princess neckline, cap sleeves, an Empire waist, and a big satin bow in the back.

I coached Mah about the ceremony. "The man'll look up at you after saying a lot of stuff. Just say, 'I do.' And nod." But when she said it in the justice's office, her accent made it sound like a question. "I do?"

Afterwards we gambled. Mah and I played the slot machines in between watching Leon play poker. A bus from Chinatown arrived bringing some of Mah's friends from the sewing factory. They had coupons for free coffee and they invited Mah, so I walked around looking into shops. I was fingering a suede shoulder bag when Leon came up from behind.

"Do you want it?" he asked.

This is what I'd worried about all through the bus ride up here: what to call him after they were married. I expected Mah to give me directions, but she didn't, and now Leon and I were alone, and I just stared at the bag.

"Let me buy it," he said.

I shrugged. I drew my finger back and forth on the suede, making lines.

He handed me two twenties and nodded toward the register. "Go on." He smiled. "Pay the lady. It's a souvenir."

When we stepped out of the store, I turned and said thanks, but avoided looking at him.

"No need." He tapped my shoulder lightly, almost like he was saying thanks.

The leather smell was strong. I looked at the bag and wondered if the braided straps and long suede fringe were me. Would I ever use this? Was it too American? I worried that I was wasting his money. I looked straight at him and asked, "What do I call you now?"

He shrugged. "Call me Leon... or call me L."

That's what they call me on the ships."

Lyman Foo, my real father, was called many things. In the villages, he was known as the Fa-



La Prince—a garden stroller, a flower picker.

Mah said, "In those days, we didn't have a choice. I was young and he picked me."

Mah said he told her, "I don't need a matchmaker; I don't need a pointer or a list. I could have picked you blind. You don't belong on these muddy roads, in these water-carving villages. Come with me, let's go! To fast, fast Hong Kong."

"A few good years," Mah said, "... ate well,

dressed well. There was a motorcar.

"But like a blink," Mah cried, "he lost it fast, slapping tiles on a three-night jongg run."

After that she called him Talk Big Word. He took his stories about gold and the cash down to the docks, into the bars, the gambling dens, and whorehouses. The lame ones, the beardless boys, the gamblers—they all listened. Lyman Foo encouraged the dreamers. F



mp—a coolie broker.  
a few years is all I need,” he promised.  
ralia was the new gold mountain, every  
e’s dream.

send for you, he said.  
sh believed; she thought the child grow-  
n her belly was insurance.

t I wasn’t a son and no tickets came in  
mail.

ery spring Mah sent him my picture to re-  
l him: *This daughter is yours, this daughter is*  
ng. She cut my hair, bought me a new  
, and told me to smile for him.

e never seen him—when I say never  
I’m thinking of the Chinese term for “seen  
ce.” I’ve seen his picture and read his let-  
I know him by the name he used in letters,  
father, Foo Lyman.”

a child, I traced over his characters: *Are*  
*you good daughter? Would you make me proud?*  
th saved every one of his letters and studied  
, turned his phrases inside out. She read  
out loud and asked, “What does it  
sound like to you? Does he want to  
come back?”

rew up waiting on the mail, too, collecting  
s; Australia was the biggest part of my col-  
n. I held the miniature pictures in my  
: the big rock, the koalas, Queen Eliza-  
The scalloped edges pieced together the  
world he lived in, and the more I had, the  
of him I felt I owned.

s money orders shrunk first in figures and  
in frequency, until Mah said they were  
eggs, rotten ones.

his last letter, his message fit into one  
e corner. Each stroke was bold, magnified:  
*Don’t blame me.*

h’s eyes dimmed first from crying and then  
the sweat jobs: hemming skirts, sewing  
buttons, head-embroidering dragons and  
saxes onto wedding cheongsams. She was  
solable. She went to bed with questions:  
ne *how* to live? *How* to face life? *How* to  
people? She woke with curses: *Turtle! Salt-*  
*g! Drunk-head!*

h called long-distance to her brother in  
Francisco. She held the black mouthpiece  
two hands and shouted, “Ai! Ai! Aiyah!”  
nies told the whole story: the runaway hus-  
the child in school, the red in her face.  
heavy, heavy face. Her child’s matted hair.  
didn’t hint, she threatened. “Death. I will  
into the harbor. Take this child, this no-  
child.” Her brother sent money, and in  
months, we were in San Francisco.

ien we arrived, the factory was sewing  
n coats. “Flipped,” her brother explained.  
work the summer fabrics in the winter and

the winter fabrics in the summer.” All summer  
the fans whirled, thick with dust.

From then on, whenever anyone mentioned  
Lyman Foo, Mah spat out three  
names: Gambler. Drunk. Corpse.

**J**ust before noon, Mah came home from  
Duckie’s mom’s smelling like the perfume sec-  
tion of Woolworth’s. Mason and I were still  
having coffee.

“Nice perm, Mrs. Leong,” Mason said.

“Really? My face not too round?”

“No,” Mason said. “You look like Miss  
Chinatown.”

Mah laughed. “Bad boy! Talk  
pretty!”

**A**fter Mason left, I helped Mah dress for  
Leon’s welcome-home dinner. She’d made  
three new outfits, but now she couldn’t decide  
which one to wear: the gabardine pantsuit, the  
pink wool coatdress, or the A-line dress with  
the lace bib. She stood on the bed and looked at  
herself in the wide mirror of the dresser. She  
turned back and forth, pressing down on the  
pocket flaps, pulling at the pant seams. “My  
body’s changed, nothing fits like before,” she  
said.

“That looks okay,” I said. I was sitting on the  
bed and could see myself in the mirror. “You  
know, Mason gave me a couple of driving  
lessons.”

“Oh yeah?” she said. “It’s always good to  
have a skill.”

“Yesterday I parked on Broadway, you know,  
on the steep side near Taylor,” I said.

She frowned. “Does this look too tight?” She  
turned sideways, sucked in, one hand pushed  
down on her belly.

I went over and tugged at the seams. “Maybe  
just a little,” I said.

“You shouldn’t sleep with him so much,” she  
said.

I looked at her but didn’t say anything.

She scrunched up her nose and scowled into  
the mirror. “My stomach sticks out too much.  
I’m going to try on the dress.” She climbed off  
the bed.

“It’s not *that* bad,” I smoothed the footpad  
out of the bedspread.

“You never know, Mason’s good now, but he  
could change,” she said.

“He’s not like that.” My voice sounded  
harsh.

“Oh.” Her mouth made that round shape  
that meant she was embarrassed. “Tomorrow  
I’m going to start exercising,” she said. She  
peeled the warband over her belly.

I stared at the top of her head. “When  
Leon saw my father this time,” I said.

Her legs stopped moving from side to side and I saw the pink of her kneecaps. She looked up at me.

"What do you think of him, my father, now?"

"Waste of time," she muttered.

"Well," I said, looking away, "don't you ever think about him?"

"Why should I? That was so long ago." She took the dress off the hanger, bunched it up in her fists, and slipped it over her head.

I folded her pants. "Mah," I said, looking up, "I'm going to move to the Mission with Mason."

Her head slowly emerged from the folds of pink wool. She looked at me in the mirror. It was quiet for a long time. I thought, *I look like her*. The shape of the face, the single fold above the eye, the smallish round mouth. I wondered: Will I be like her? Will I marry like her?

She turned around, away from me. The unzipped dress showed her back, still straight; her skin was still smooth. I went over to zip her up, and when she turned around, I said, "Wear this, you look great."

"No Chinese there, you know," she said.

"There are some," I said.

"Why not get married?" she asked. She still wouldn't look at me.

"I'll see how it goes," I said. For a minute I expected the worst, that she'd slap me, hit me with a hanger, call me names.

"Give it a test." She nodded and then muttered, almost to herself, "Remember to have a way out."

**A**t Tao-Tao's, we sat under Genthe's photo of two little girls walking down an alley; they're holding hands, looking back. I had other favorites: the grocer with the beckoning smile, the cobbler, the balloon peddler. We ordered enough to invite the spirits of the old-timers to join us. The food came steaming: clams with black beans, lobster, fresh sea bass, and oysters, salt-and-pepper prawns, and soft-shelled crabs. Our hands were busy, messy from cracking the shells. I let Leon eat his first bowl of rice in peace. When Mah handed him his second bowl, I refilled his tea and asked him, "What did he look like? My father. You saw him, didn't you?"

Leon put an oyster in his mouth. "Dark," he said.

"Dark? Like how?" I asked.

"Like a coolie," Mason said.

Leon looked at Mason. "Hey, you know that word?"

"Sure," Mason shrugged.

Leon grinned. "From the sun, like a dried plum."

"I thought he was some big developer," I said.

"A man inside, behind a desk, you know."

Mah muttered something as she cracked open a clamshell.

"That's people talking," Leon said.

I thought about it. "So, what'd you talk about?"

"Not much. I mentioned the situation here."

"Well?" I waited. "What exactly did you say?"

"I told him about your mah and me." He looked over at Mah, who was busy with her claw.

"Well? What did he say?" I couldn't stand. Leon was so slow sometimes, it killed me. I wanted more. I gave my chopsticks three taps on the tabletop. Mah looked up, scowling.

"Easy." Mason put his hand on my leg, on my back. He peeled a prawn and put it on my plate, and I popped the whole thing into my mouth.

"What about me? Did he ask about me?"

"Sure," Leon said. "I told him that you finished school, stuff like that." He looked at Mah.

She gave him some fish. "Good piece," she said.

I wasn't satisfied. "How'd it end?"

"End?" He put the morsel in his mouth.

"What else? Shook hands, said goodbye, long life and good luck."

**I** listened to us eating—Mah and Leon, Mason and me—the soft suck of rice in mouths, the click of the chopsticks against bowls. These sounds were comfortable, and for a moment, I was tempted to fall back into the easiness of being Mah's daughter, of letting her be my whole life.

When Mah and Leon were first married, I always surprised when he came home from his voyages. I expected him to change at sea, to come back a different man—I think I even expected him to come back as my father. But he was always Leon Leong, in his starched white shirt, his burnt-sugar tan, his S.S. *Independent* lined sack full of presents. And I finally saw why.

Mason had been saying: Mah loves Leon.

**A**ll my things fit into the back of Mason's cousin's Volvo. The last thing I saw as I backed out of the alley was the old, blue sign: #2-4-6 UPDAIRE. No one's ever corrected it, somebody repaints it every year because the photos at Tao-Tao's, the ghosts of the old-timers hang over us, wanting us to look back and remember.

I was reassured; I knew what I kept in my heart would last. So I wasn't worried when I turned that corner, leaving the blue sign behind. Salmon Alley, Mah and Leon—everything but the backdaire.



# KILLING TIME

A visit to a Cambodian refugee camp  
By Margaret Drabble

an Aranyaprathet small, quiet Thai town about 140 miles from Bangkok, a town where East and West meet in a bizarre juxtaposition. Ban Aranyaprathet is situated not far from the Thai-Cambodian border, and is a starting point for many of the many refugee camps peopled by those who fled Pol Pot's killing fields and the Khmer Rouge invasion of



Laos that followed. Getting a permit from the army to go to the border has not been easy; I had sat in offices in Bangkok wasting time and nervously waiting for impenetrable documents before setting off with a reluctant Thai driver for the five-hour journey to Ban Aranyaprathet. The war in Southeast Asia continues here, and there is always the chance of being killed or blown up by a land mine. The town was stuffed with and surrounded by international aid agencies, and it was clear that its way of life had been profoundly affected by these outsiders. There were noodles and

Margaret Drabble's most recent novel is *The Woman in the Street*.

cuckoo clocks and lotuses and orchids and fluffy Snoopy dogs and corn-soup-flavored ice cream and Ritz crackers for sale. One saw pedicabs (the *samlahs*, long banished from Bangkok) and also, at night, whole families sitting almost on the pavement in the warm open darkness, glued to their television sets. My driver didn't like it here. He said he wanted to go back to Bangkok. At least, I think that's what he said (we didn't understand one another too well). But after a night's rest I forced the poor man to take me through military checkpoints and into one of the nearest and most "open" of the refugee camps, Site 2.

I don't know what I'd expected, but

it was not quite this. I knew that Site 2—with its 174,000 inhabitants, or just about half the Cambodians remaining in Thai border camps—is the largest of the camps. In fact, it is the world's second-biggest Khmer city, after Phnom Penh, and the fourth-largest city in Thailand. Site 2 had been hastily built early in 1985 by the United Nations Border Relief

Operation (UNBRO)—a devastating dry-season offensive launched by the Vietnamese army in 1984 had destroyed earlier camps—and is now administered by the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), the anti-Vietnam and anti-Khmer Rouge army under the political leadership of former prime minister Son Sann. The camp, I also knew, would be overcrowded, under-policed (there is no system of houses in the camp), and the people would be bordering on starvation, within range of the Vietnamese artillery, which does not distinguish between soldiers and civilians.

I had read a lot about the camp, but

Tony Jackson's *Just Waiting to Die? Cambodian Refugees in Thailand*, July 1987) and historical analyses (notably William Shawcross's *The Quality of Mercy*), but nothing could prepare one for the scale or the mood of this strange limbo. Row upon regular row of little thatched huts lined straight intersecting grid roads of red dust and extended across a dry flat plain as far as the eye could see. The roads were full of a moving population going nowhere much; there were people everywhere—walking, plodding, limping, bicycling, drifting. They were dressed in every conceivable style of dress: in jeans, sarongs, ski pants, and jumpsuits; in flowered beach shirts, neat belted uniforms, batik, and Benetton. They wore a crazy variety of headgear against the fierce sun—peasant straw hats, checked scarves, baseball caps, Wild West Stetsons, berets, jungle-camouflage canvas hats, even woolly bonnets with pom-poms. One or two women carried pretty little parasols. The many red and turquoise bicycles were adorned with plastic flowers.

This vast moving crowd did not, at first glance, look hungry (one can see worse poverty in India, in Africa), though I know many of the children (and a third of Cambodia's population was born in the camps) are suffering from malnutrition. They are looked after by the U.N., provided with free rice and water, and the sanitary conditions seem adequate. Disease and famine are not the major problems here. There are other nightmares.

These are, technically, displaced people, who cannot qualify as refugees. In theory, they await resettlement. Some have waited a decade, some have been born into waiting. Some want to go home to Cambodia, and the Thai government recently announced plans to begin a repatriation program. The superpowers squabble, Pol Pot trains his troops and coerces refugees to serve as porters—the Khmer Rouge controls five camps, with about 75,000 inhabitants—and the rest wait.

Nobody, after all those obstacles and checkpoints, seemed to care where I went around Site 2 or what I did there. I left my driver sheltering in the shade and safety of a compound

run by the Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees (COERR), and went walking. I talked to whoever would or could talk to me, and some of what I found was exactly what I'd expected—for instance, the rather overeager, English-speaking thirty-year-old who wanted to take me on a semi-official tour of the Khmer Women's Association compound. At his suggestion and through his interpretation, I talked to one elderly woman, at work in a weaving workshop, whose husband (a cinema operator, if I understood rightly) had been murdered "in Pol Pot regime." She wiped away her tears with a dirty handkerchief and spat neatly in the dust beneath a corner of her mat. I felt she had been made to tell her tale many many times before. The phrases "in Pol Pot regime," "in Pol Pot time" came up again and again. My tour guide invited me to feel the bump on the back of his head, inflicted "in Pol Pot time," and then told me that he believed in democracy. "The word comes from the Greek, it means 'rule by the people,'" he informed me, to my surprise, then dispelled surprise by showing me his history book—a much-thumbed American children's paperback with colored pictures of Marie Antoinette and George Washington. He knew it by heart. It was his only text.

Of course, Pol Pot's regime was known as Democratic Kampuchea. Confusing stuff, history.

I wandered on alone, chatting with children and mothers, in sign and fruit-gum language, and negotiating pigs and hens, until adopted by the Young Man With the Bicycle. He showed me the market, he took me to his hut, he sat me shoeless on his platform, and he told me his story. Twenty years old, he had arrived in the camp in 1979 from Siem Reap in northwestern Cambodia, alone, an orphan. His parents had died "in Pol Pot regime"; he was saved by "orphangers." He had no family, no friends. As he told me this, we were watched across the tiny room by three women, one of them suckling a baby; a crowd of infants with runny noses; and a clutch of chickens.

He was handsome, smiling, intelligent. And paranoid. When I admired

his gleaming red bicycle, he insisted that it was not his. His jeans, he said, were not his either. His own were older and more ragged. When complimented him on his English, he went off into an incomprehensible monologue about teachers, peasant lessons, money, how poor he was, and why the neighbors always criticized him. The word "criticize" was repeated, like some old echo of Year 10 at the start of Pol Pot time, where the criticism of neighbors meant death. "When I tell my poor story," he kept repeating. His voice was sweet, insistent, plaintive, an incessant lament.

There were many such young men in Site 2, all with a sad story to tell. I met a number of them, even on a brief visit. A few had it all written out, ready for a listener, a reader. They gave me their addresses for future pen-pal correspondence. The addresses consisted of anonymous numbers, of Sections, Plots, Groups, and Sites. Did mail reach them? Was there a postal code for the camp? They smiled and did not know. They did not know what happened beyond their boundaries. I began to have a eerie feeling that somebody (possibly James Fenton?) had been conducting a creative-writing class in the camp. All these stories, waiting, waiting.

These are not the killing fields; these are the fields of killing. They breed violence, rape (of children, too, increasingly), robbery, extortion, banditry, depression, psychosis, suicide—but what else do you expect, in a city with no employment and no prospects? There are dreams of escape, of emigration, but most of the inhabitants have relatives abroad, no strings tied. The lucky ones have already gone. Little wonder that joining a guerrilla group presents itself as an attractive alternative to enforced idleness. I noticed a poster advertising Alcohol Anonymous, and drugs are known to be a serious problem.

There are, of course, attempts to organize the camp dwellers into the semblance of productive and communal life, attempts both internal and external. The governmental and non-governmental agencies—Cooper-



RE, ARC, COERR, UNBRO, RC, and a host of other bewildering and sometimes mutually antagonistic acronyms—supply services and training. Operation Handicap provides prostheses for those who have lost their limbs by stepping on mines. I was shown a pile of crutches and artificial legs, and wood about to be turned into more. A diagram of a cross-section of the human brain distressingly adorned the bamboo wall.

The workers here seemed engaged and committed, but some of the projects, inevitably, breathed a kind of ornamental pointlessness, a desperate freedom. A group of women sat making soft dolls. For what, why? "For the children to play with," they said unconvincingly. The dolls were horrible. They reminded me of dolls I saw made in a Young Pioneer camp in the Soviet Union once. Ugly, cheap, soft, stupid, futile. Pseudo-Ok. Dull therapy.

The group with whom I made best contact was in UNBRO's education department. Here, I heard about literacy schemes and child-care problems, and chatted with some young men painting posters for Human Rights Day. I met one composed dignified woman, a teacher from Phnom Penh whose excellent French was much easier to follow than most people's stumbling English. She told me of her escape, two weeks on foot through jungle and minefields, across the border, and of her fears for her five children. She made no complaints about herself: perhaps her work offered some satisfaction. "But my children," she said—"for them I would like a better life. What is their future?"

Later, at another UNBRO office, I met a mystery man, a promised contact who was to tell me I knew not much. I waited and waited. I drank a glass of warm water. The driver tried to go home, as it would soon be a few minutes—all outsiders have to leave the camp by four-thirty, and he did not like the idea of driving in the dark. (Quite rightly, as it turned out.) A small group of men teased a French-speaking child, in French. Occasionally they would address me with a different remark. Eventually, in response to a desultory question, I said

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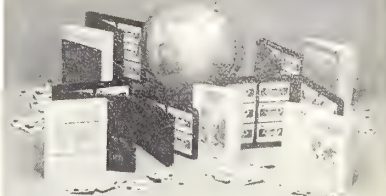
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that I still hoped one day to get to Phnom Penh. If I could get a visa.

They suddenly came to life—their faces lit up, the very tone of their voices changed. A spark had caught. They pressed me with questions: I told them all I knew of what was happening in their own country: I described film and photographs of Phnom Penh I'd seen recently in Britain; I reported Margaret Thatcher's August meeting with Prince Sihanouk and her condemnation of the Khmer Rouge. I cursed myself for not taking with me my file of clippings from the Western press and the *Bangkok Post*. They in turn told me that the pound was strong and the dollar weak—this much they had gleaned from their radio.

We talked of the problems of accurate reporting, of false first impressions, of misinformation, of people in the streets of Phnom Penh made to smile for the world's newsreels. They laughed, they shook my hand, they began to type messages and address envelopes for their friends in Toronto, in California, in Cambodia itself. They did not want to tell me about camp life; they were sick of being interrogated about community programs to make soft toys. They wanted news from elsewhere. They were starved, not for food but for information and action. Unlike the Young Man With the Bicycle, they remembered the real, the normal world and how it once worked. They wanted to know how I'd got into Site 2. I told them it hadn't been easy. They smiled, with understanding, with irony. "You cannot get in," they said, "and we cannot get out."

And, indeed, in the next five minutes the curfew bell rang, and I was on my way back through hours of darkness to Bangkok. I had had only a glimpse of what for them may be a life sentence, and I was glad to escape. What remains most vividly is the memory of life suspended, life turned in on itself, life rotting from inutility. The people are fed and watered and visited, as one of them put it, like animals in a zoo, and their attempts to make sense of their lot are doomed to frustration. An International Red Cross official told me that relief workers in Cambodia tend to regard those

stranded in the border camp "spoiled brats" whose fate is some of their own making. I remember handsome Young Man With the Bicycle, and his soft pleading voice, friendly gestures. He would make a hopeless terrorist, a hopeless resistance fighter. He said (perhaps fully) that he would like to do agriculture. But in Site 2 rice came in lorries and water flows from a tank. He will wait, and wait, in that dusty no-man's-land, a spoiled boy, soft toy, an unborn child.

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# MY SHIRT TALE

Of style and sensibility (you might say)

By Stanley Elkin

remember what it cost if not exactly what it looked like—twelve ancient dollars, or doubloons, whatever it was money called back in those days. Twenty percent of our monthly rent, six movies for myself and my wife, something between a half and a percent of a T. A.'s salary reaching freshman rhetoric at the University of Illinois. So twelve bucks' worth of 1953 wampum expended in one fell swoop of outlay.

Because a shirt is probably the only thing in which I was halfway decent. Wrapping myself in them as though they were flags, purely personal patriotism, my innocent streamers of self, my pretty promises of being. And of all the shirts in that decade, this is the one, though I don't remember it exactly, I remember at all. It was yellow, the bright, rich, improbable yellow of an egg yolk, but yellow enough, yellow of a butter pat, yellow as cholesterol. And of a material and I vaguely basted, and vaguely

Elkin is the author of numerous novels including *The Living End*, *The Magic of Mr. T.*, and *The Rabbi of Lud*. His last piece for *Harper's Magazine*, "The Muses of the Mind," appeared in the December 1988



quilted, too, I think, as if the material had been directly sewn onto its tissue pattern—a crinkly shirt, a seersucker shirt. It had shiny opaque buttons big as nickels and the color, I recall, of a blood blister on your finger. And a slim, purplish grid, precisely the color of the buttons, at its cuffs and up its front fenced its wide yellow butter-pat fields and crops like aerial photography, a golden, glorious acreage.

And this next is tough to figure because I'm not, I think, the type. Though maybe I am. I eat the hard parts first, I mean. Observe the deferred appetites, keeping them like a kind of kosher, working my way from the radicchio and endives, the kale and cabbages, all food's sour foliage,

past its blunt, pale vegetable instrumentality, its parsnips and turnips and eggplants, all the way through to my fried fats and favorites. But not the type anyway, so where did it come from? How did it get there? How, in me, arise, procedural as the first this/then/that sequences in a board game, this lagging, red-tape heart? What, could I be the type? Not in my heart, of course. In my heart a big spender. Or where did those dozen dollars come from with which I bought it?

Putting it away once I had it, the shirt I mean, for a special occasion, on a sort of layaway, hope and expectation's dower.

Then, in June 1953, T. S. Eliot came to Champaign-Urbana to read his poetry, and I took the shirt out of my closet and wore it for the first time. Perhaps I thought he'd see it on me and make me a star. Though I'm not that type either, really, and don't do investments. If I make them at all it's in special occasions. (As dessert is a special occasion, as red meat is after supper's pale flora.)

You have to understand something. This was 1953, but only five years earlier I'd still been in high school. In certain psychic ways I still was. Now I must tell you something

about the nature of courtship and show business in those days.

It was the Golden Age of Lip Sync. And we can imagine how it must have begun.

Since the invention of the phonograph, all wars, for reasons of troop morale, have had a tradition not only of parodic cross-dressing, servicemen bereft of female companionship doing sexual burlesque for each other—think of “There Is Nothin’ Like a Dame” in *South Pacific*—but of cross-singing, too, an elaborate choreographies of gesture and mouth movement. I don’t know why this was considered entertaining or even mildly amusing, but it was. During the war, and deep into the post-war years, it was a mainstay, a staple on variety shows and on all the amateur hours. On Dick Clark’s *American Bandstand* recording stars lip-synched the words to their own records. There were offshoots and, no longer parody, the curious practice was raised to the level of a “talent” in pageants such as Miss Teenage America. One sees such things still, of course, but it’s not like it was. Now it’s only archaeology. There were giants in the earth back when I’m talking.

I’ve said I never understood the appeal of lip sync. In even its more dramatic avatars I didn’t, where, like some one-man band, one person got to play all the parts, the percussion, the reeds, the strings, the brass, some Old MacDonald of an act, here a solo, there a chorus, ee-yi, ee-yi o! But, in ways I didn’t understand at the time, I may actually have been inspired by such routines or, if not inspired, at least shaped, influenced at least, maybe even married.

For—it shames me to say it—back in high school, then, later, back in the earlier Fifties, I used to sing to all my dates. I don’t mean I lip-synched to the other guy’s hits, or stood, proud as any Spaniard or Mexican, out in the elements beneath their windows or in their courtyards administering open, public Serenade to the girls. I sang to them, there on the dance floor, into their actual ears on the very first date. Nor did I merely move my lips. I impersonated Sinatra, impersonated Crosby, I did Dick Haymes to them and committed Perry

Como. All the greatest crooners’ greatest hits. It was, I thought, the way the sexes spoke to each other, pure mating ritual, purposeful as, oh, dipping a wing in dust and hopping about counterclockwise in the nest on your left foot, or swimming backwards, say, and rearing up on your dorsal to the fishy, liquid vertical before dumping your milt, by evolution sanctioned, by all the purring sacreds of biology.

**T**hen I was a graduate student and T. S. Eliot came to town.

Yes, *that* T. S. Eliot. The one who changed my mating call. (Because isn’t that what literature is finally, poetry only the upscale of all that lyrical moonery-junery in all those lyrics in all those dance tunes?) That T. S. Eliot, the special occasion on which my twelve-dollar shirt-cum-gonfalon had been waiting all along, without knowing it perhaps, but willing to bet you, dollars to 1953 doughnuts, that, like love, it would know it when it saw it and be, as they say, ready to wear. The red-letter day which was all it was waiting on until it could come out of the closet and shine, I thought, yellow for yellow and bright for bright against the sun itself.

And I say changed my mating calls because that’s exactly what happened. I was a college boy now, a graduate student *nuch*, even a T.A., and changed my lyrics if not my tune, no longer so ready, as once I was, to drop “You sigh and then a song begins/ You speak and I hear violins/ It’s magic” into my girlfriends’ ears like so many coins in so many parking meters. (Well not so many, *never* so many. Damn few, really, when you come right down.) But changing my style and changing my ways.

“We,” I’d tell them out there on the dance floors, “are the hollow men.”

We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

And, when I had their attention,

This is the way the world ends

—I’d inform,

This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper

—I’d whimper. Or suggesting, suggestively,

Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against  
the sky  
Like a patient etherised upon a table  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted  
streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap  
hotels...

Urging them, pleading with them

Oh, do not ask, ‘What is it?’  
Let us go and make our visit.

Only hoping it served Eliot better than it served me. Then, recovering, telling them,

Because I do not hope to turn again  
Because I do not hope  
Because I do not hope to turn,

courting them on a borrowed occasion, on the other fellow’s wear and blues, as I’d—what?—synched those fox-trots, more than and more than now, too, actual synching, actual soul synching, sitting down on what, Catholic convert or no Catholic convert, I never realized was the other WASP’s doing a young man’s inverted verbiage and following willy-nilly the old au courant fascism of style.

So there I was, into my hoarse red-letter, special-occasion, so rainy-day shirt reserves. And then was T. S. Eliot, into his. Into his, *ly*. Looking, I mean, just exactly as you expected he’d look like, what was supposed to look like, as cement monuments precisely look what precisely think they’re going to look like when you finally get to see their unmistakable, *sui generis* so so identical to the head’s forehead forearmed impressions of them you’d disarmed and actually experienced as someone in transference at a shrink’s, *déjà vu’d*, I suppose, a victim of a mugging. What he looked like was what you expected him to look like, tall, but no taller than you thought he’d be, slender, but no slenderer than it surprised you, in a wool suit no darker and no less familiar than you’d anticipated. Wearing familiar spectacles you’d assumed he’d wear, that made his famous, in



ace look kindly as the picture of  
held in your head. T. S. Eliot  
T. S. Eliot, avuncular as the  
of the family in films. Me, on  
ther hand, hey, I could have  
anybody. How had I ever sup-  
he might recognize me and  
me a star?

archivist at the University of  
is reports that no one introduced  
liot, and while that seems diffi-  
o believe, I have no memory of  
e introducing him, not even  
lf. That he made no commen-  
n the poems he read, other than  
e us their titles, is certainly true,  
from one to the next like a mu-  
at a recital.

read for fifty minutes, many of  
oems the same selections he  
on his Caedmon recording. (His  
registering the same cadences  
known it would register, in all  
me neutral pitches and serious,  
table, understated accents; no-  
at all like my own angry, spuri-  
ous sync.) But the only poem I  
ately remember him reading that  
was "Journey of the Magi."

old coming we had of it,  
the worst time of the year  
a journey, and such a long journey:  
ways deep and the weather sharp,  
very dead of winter.'

the camels galled, sore-footed,  
fractory,  
g down in the melting snow.  
re were times we regretted  
summer palaces on slopes, the  
races,  
l the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
n the camel men cursing and  
umbling

l running away, and wanting their  
quor and women,  
l the night-fires going out, and the  
ck of shelters,  
l the cities hostile and the towns  
friendly  
l the villages dirty and charging  
gh prices:

ard time we had of it.  
he end we preferred to travel all  
ght,  
ping in snatches,  
h the voices singing in our ears,  
ying  
t this was all folly.

thing dramatic, nothing end-of-  
ord here, just arranging the  
c goods, nonflamboyant as stock  
traightening clothing. He had

You deserve a factual look at . . .

## Those "Moderate" Arab States Should the U.S. sell them advanced weaponry?

Should we sell sophisticated armaments to the so-called "moderate" Arab countries? Recently, Saudi Arabia, usually considered the leader of the "moderate" Arabs, turned to Britain for the biggest arms contract ever. Many are concerned that the U.S. Congress, being reluctant to allow unlimited arms sales to the Arabs, is depriving the U.S. of lucrative business.

### What are the facts?

■ The Arab states boast today one of the largest, most deadly and most sophisticated concentration of armament the world has ever seen, surpassed only (and not by all that much) by the arsenals of the two super-powers. And the buildup of arms continues incessantly—making one wonder how these essentially backward countries can possibly absorb and utilize all this weaponry. Excepting the oil-rich Gulf countries, most of these Arab states can fairly be described as economic basket cases, with social and demographic problems that seem almost unsolvable. Still, they dedicate a large share of their meager resources to the acquisition of ever more deadly and offensive weaponry, instead of putting them into the service of building their countries and uplifting their populations.

■ Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the "moderates," is an immensely wealthy but sparsely populated country. It fields an army of only 72,000 men, but has 190 military planes and 550 tanks—just about the largest ratio of military hardware to military manpower in the world. Until recently, the fiction was maintained that it needed this enormous arsenal in order to defend itself against the "threat of Iran." But now that Iran is prostrate, this can no longer be alleged, and even the most naive no longer believe it. As King Khaled put it quite bluntly: "When we build our military power, we have no designs on anybody, except those who took away our land and the holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are!"

■ "Moderate" Saudi Arabia has participated in every war against Israel, from the birth of the state in 1948. It has never made peace with Israel. It is the principal paymaster of

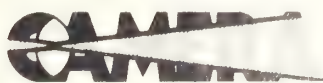
Syria, Israel's most fervent enemy, and of the PLO, which is sworn to the destruction of Israel. It is the main player in the worldwide Arab boycott of Israel, whose purpose is the destruction of Israel's economy. Yet, Saudi Arabia, already armed to the teeth and beyond, has just acquired batteries of super missiles from China. They can reach every point in Israel within minutes and can be armed with chemical and atomic warheads. And Saudi Arabia has squadrons of fighter planes at its air base in Tobruk, just one minute's flying time from Israel.

■ But Saudi Arabia's "defense" needs are insatiable. It has just concluded an arms deal with Great Britain amounting to \$27 billion, the largest ever negotiated by that country. It includes at least 40 Tornado fighter planes, 80 Westland helicopters, a minimum of six Sundown minesweepers, the construction of two major air bases, and much more. It is an enormous package and has only one purpose: to be part of the coordinated force that, it is hoped, will eventually destroy Israel. The remarkable thing is that Britain will not sell any arms to Israel, because it feels that it could "destabilize the region."

■ But those bare statistics refer only to some of the so-called "moderates." Including the self-proclaimed non-moderates, tiny Israel, the size of New Jersey, with 90% of its population concentrated in an area the size of metropolitan Indianapolis, faces one of the most daunting and fearsome military machines the world has ever seen. Counting only Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Egypt, Israel faces 17,265 tanks, 2789 combat aircraft and 3 million armed men. And that is before the huge sale of military material by Britain, missile deals with the Chinese, and other weaponry in the pipeline.

The concept of the "moderate" Arab states is a myth. The Arabs are single-mindedly determined to destroy Israel. They are spending hundreds of billions of dollars in order to attain strategic superiority to Israel, and then to accomplish its destruction. Israel is the only viable strategic asset the United States has in the entire area. Those who sell weapons to Israel's enemies—foreign countries and American companies—are playing into the hands of America's enemies. We do not find the Soviet Union selling weapons to the enemies of its allies. Why should the United States be any less straightforward in its foreign policy? If Israel were vanquished, the Persian Gulf with its vital resources, the entire Middle East and the Mediterranean Basin would fall under the unquestioned dominion of the Soviet Union.

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	F	N	D	M	P	K	
X	S	Q	M	N	8	K	O
D	K	P	N	E	B	9	G
X	P	D	N	C	B	4	4
X	L	N	C	I	10	N	C
	N	E	2	2	S	6	
	Z	T	I	C			

## NOTES FOR "SHORT FORM"

ACROSS: 1. YES-AC, reversed; 3. ANNE-X; 5. EF(F)ENDI, anagram; 6. P-IQUET(anagram); 8. EX-CESS; 10. QUEUE, "cue"; 11. EMANATE, hidden; 12. KAYO(t), anagram; 14. DE-C-A(flect)-Y; 15. PEON-Y, pun; 16. B(quick)-ENIGN(e) (reversal); 17. E(X)PEDIENCY, anagram; 19. BEFORE, anagram; 22. EXCEL-L-ENCY; 24. T(h)E-NANCY; 25. (m)ANY; 27. TUTU, "too-too"; 28. E(schew)S-SEX; 29. ZITI, hidden in reverse; 30. (h)I(t)C(h)Y

DOWN: 1. CA(YEN)INE; 2. SEE(scotland)-Y; 3. ANEMONE, hidden in reverse; 4. E-XPIATE (anagram); 7. C(oral)-AY, & Lit; 9. ESCA(PE)E, anagram; 10. KE(W)PIE, anagram; 11. EMINENCY, hidden; 12. C(.A.) (N)INE; 13. E-EGO, reversed; 16. BEEBE, "BB"; 17. E(X)JETS; 18. SEE-E-YET-O-E-YE; 20. FORE(NS)ICS, anagram; 21. FORESEE, anagram; 23. ELLEN, hidden; 24. ..T-ENNESSEE(anagram); 26. EASY, hidden; 27. IT-TUT, reversed.

SOLUTION TO MARCH DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 75). CYNTHIA HEIMEL. SEX TIPS FOR GIRLS. Seventy-seven percent of infatuation is based upon fantasy. As long as the two of you are going for quiet walks along deserted beaches . . . you're fine. But the minute one of you needs extensive root-canal work, forget it. Real life does not sit well with infatuation.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 76, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by April 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the May issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 74 are George Mitterman, Laguna Hills, California; George Y. Cherlin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Jack Scheumann, Tamarac, Florida.

knocked me down, the Lip- and Synched Kid, with a feather. I have put myself under citizen's haul myself up on charges, my callowness so much as for bad bills. But what good is crying spilled youth? Most youth, you're very smart or very lucky spilled. You try to be better. So you make an attempt to come your own.

Mr. Eliot was signing books people were clambering up on stage with anthologies, the quoise Harcourt, Brace *Complements and Plays* extended, or with torn from loose-leaf notebooks their homework. (I have an impression that he moved toward the and leaned into the footlights, ing down, meeting his fans better than.) I asked Joan to get those autographs for me. Humiliated embarrasses her less.

It was, all in all, a grand even splendid evening, just as special occasion as any nifty shirt was, and would always be, my Eliot shirt—could hope for. June. Almost certainly I would worn it again, each time I put getting some extra, associated Proustian kick out of it, featuring myself in the true layered look one that goes back, I mean, the that comes with nostalgia several like buttons. (You have to come your own, I said. I know, I know Rome wasn't built in a day. Should your character have any time?) So I must have worn it and just don't remember.

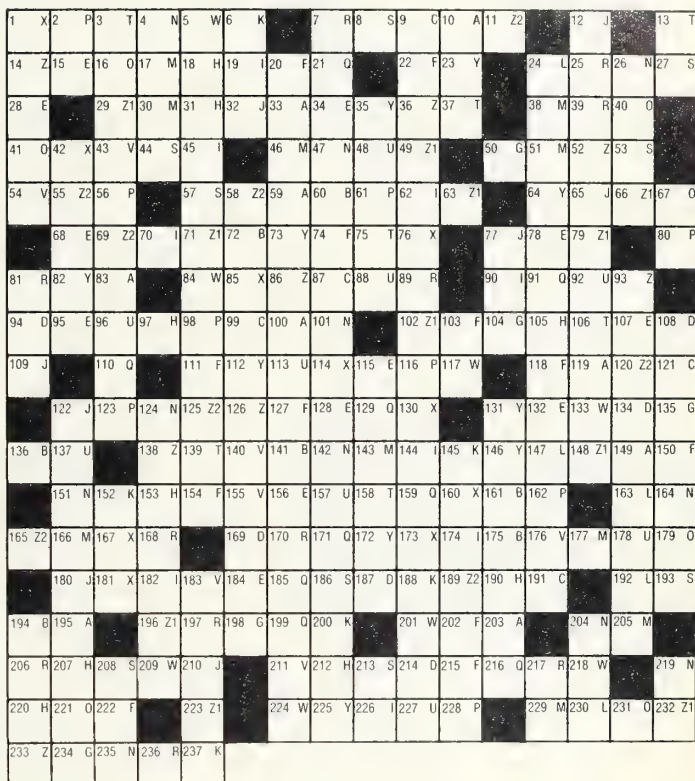
Except for the last time. A special occasion. A lollapalooza day I was inducted into the army Chicago. Wearing it to Fort Le Wood on the train and, then, been given my uniforms, my field and my khakis, bringing it with the way to Fort Carson, Colorado where I did my basic training where I was told to send home civilian clothes because I would need them, and where, being didn't know how to wrap a package finally removed it from my footlocker where my C.O. had gotten tired looking at it during inspection at Rome and my character still unimpaired threw it away.



# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 76

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution last month's puzzle appear on page 76.



## CLUES

## WORDS

Sharpener; stimulant

33 119 10 83 59 203  
149 100 195

Become better

60 141 175 72 161 194  
136

Golf course

87 99 191 9 121

Am. jurist (1866-1944), baseball commissioner 1921-44  
Example; picture; diagram

156 15 132 78 28 107  
184 128 115 68 34 95

Accidental, appearing casually

74 20 215 103 150 222 154 118  
127 22 202 111

Swindle

50 198 234 104 135

Ecclesiastical skull-cap covering the tonsure

31 207 153 212 220 105 18 97  
190

Rash, eager; violent

144 90 70 62 182 19 174 226  
45

1926 Milt Gross opus dedicated "to the guy that invented dumb-waiters and thin walls" (2 wds.)

210 180 32 65 122 12 77 109

Position; attitude

200 188 152 6 145 237

Unbending; graceless

163 147 230 24 192

Appraisal

177 229 51 166 30 38 46 17  
205 143

Burns poem: "It was a' for our \_\_\_\_\_" (2 wds.)

26 235 101 47 219 151 142 164  
124 204 4

Appendages on the chins of certain birds

41 221 179 16 67 40 231

In the very act (hyph.)

123 116 61 98 2 162 228 56  
80

Q. Ready in contrivance

216 129 185 21 199 159 110 171  
91

R. 1959 Albee play (3 wds.)

7 206 170 236 197 25 168 217  
81 39 89

S. Nearest, next; following without a time lapse

57 208 27 186 44 193 8 213  
53

T. William I of England and his followers

75 139 3 13 158 106 37

U. Valor; dashing courage

113 92 88 227 48 178 157 137  
96

V. Instrument for drawing ellipses

54 43 211 140 176 183 155

W. Quality of being hard, unyielding, intractable

5 201 117 133 84 209 224 218

X. Sturdy yeoman among the Merry Men (2 wds.)

167 160 130 76 173 85 1 42  
114 181

Y. Forcible entry

172 64 23 35 146 131 73 112  
225 32

Z. Seaport, North Island, New Zealand

233 14 138 52 176 56 93 36

Z1. Requital, especially of evil

102 60 49 63 148 29 212 79  
223 71 196

Z2. Denial of reality, of truth; extreme skepticism

5 189 55 165 125 120 11 69





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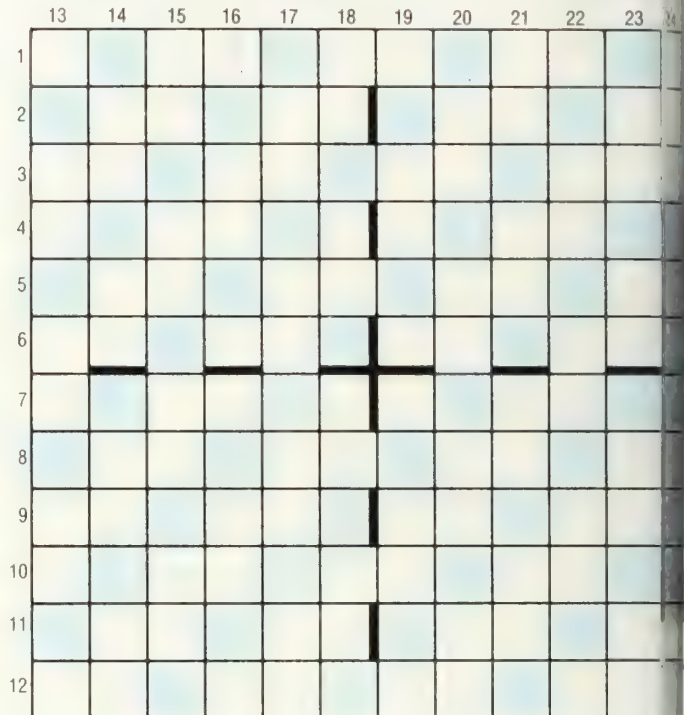
# PUZZLE

## Single Occupancy

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

**E**ach shaded square holds an unchecked letter. If it belongs to the Across entry, the crossing Down entry simply skips that square ... and vice versa. Half of the rows and columns are divided in half by a bar—these pairs of entries are clued together, not necessarily in order.

Five clue answers are capitalized words, and one is Latin. All other answers are in the latest Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 76.



### Across

1. He hollers about Latin female—what a bloomer (10)
2. To want the same counterpart (4)  
French for "stream" (4)
3. Question: Is romance ridiculous without sex (12)
4. This has leonine connection, upon reflection! (4)  
A thousand flipped over noisy place—is this how the singer gets a buzz on? (5)
5. They tell tales of Troy, surrounded by outrageous richness (9)
6. Thanks heartless boss for checks (4)  
Clergyman doesn't finish the other side of this page (5)
7. Fiery pile, or back part of it! (4)  
Rumble seat's distinct advantage (5)
8. Generous person in prison? Just the opposite, and this makes a point (9)
9. One of the Kush, possibly fakir (5)  
Man going around in circle—labyrinth maker? (6)
10. Decorated lad with below-par scores (average grade) deleted (10, *two words*)
11. Look, to a Roman this is how whimsical behavior starts (4)  
Like crumbling earth left in army's devastation (5)
12. Uncapped cherry soda stirred for Carter's aide (9)

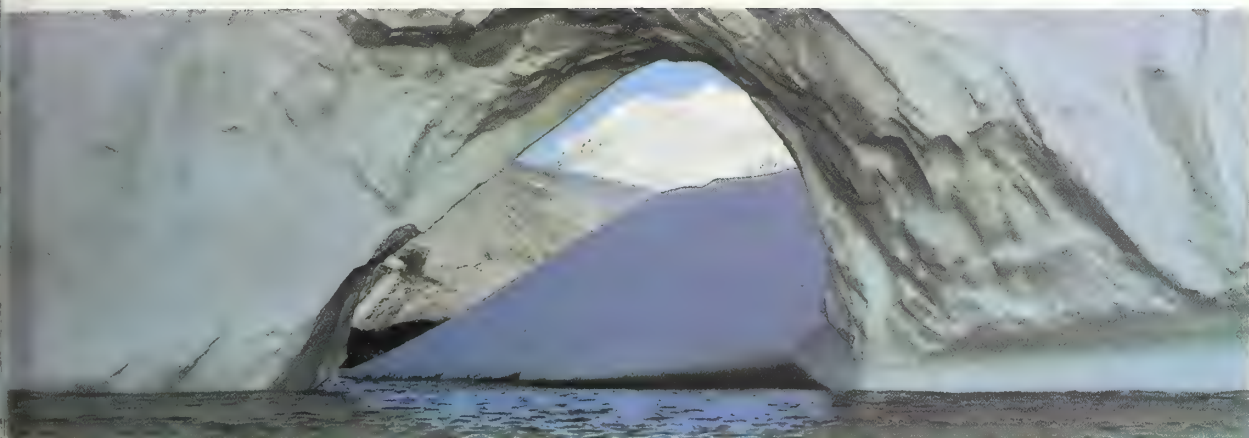
### Down

13. Returned cracked bat, disturbed about strikeout (11)
14. Run into a small uprising in part of the Philippines (5)  
In plain language, the Right is consumed by affectation (5)
15. Look and listen when taking quick answer from usure (9, *two words*)
16. Waltz's illogicality holds back composer (5)  
Imagine not starting cryptic puzzle (6)
17. As a rule it can appear out of focus to Marilyn (11)
18. Loud contemporary music outfit (5)  
Try to hold the principles of universal law in agreement with the facts (5)
19. Fruit Loop's gone sour, I objectively admitted (6)  
Doctor exalts the most inconsiderate (6)
20. Drunken Pa has Ripple, getting goofier (11)
21. You once joined up with Catholic church? Ugh! (5)  
Drunk went around in circles topless (5)
22. Sweepers needing week around his bachelor quarters (11, *two words*)
23. Growths on tree trunks—chop up all but top (5)  
Quiet time for penance, without using any names (5)
24. A deserter's discomfited State again (10)

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# HARPER'S



## OUR FRAIL PLANET IN COLD, CLEAR VIEW

The South Pole as Global Laboratory

*By Barry Lopez*

## USERS, LIKE ME

Membership in the Church of Drugs

*A memoir by Gail Regier*

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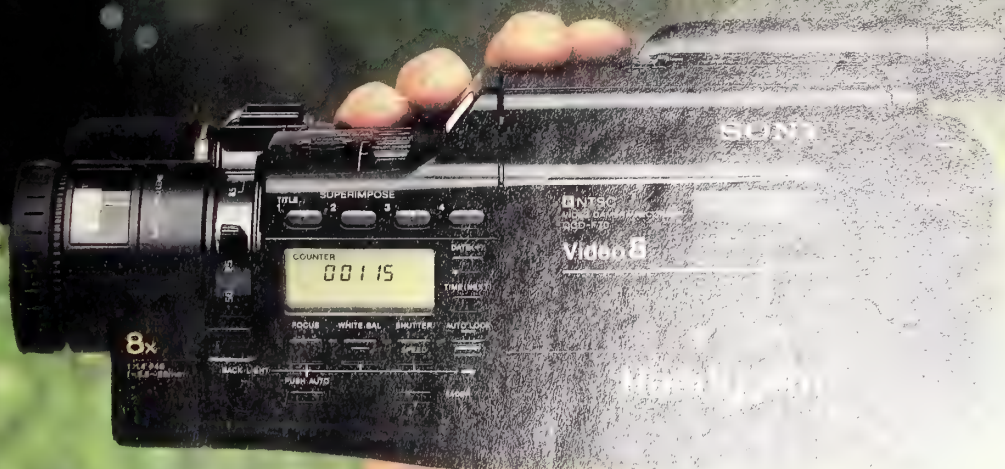
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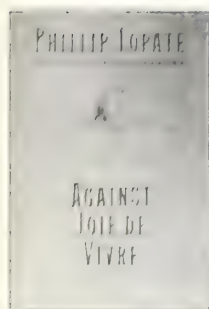
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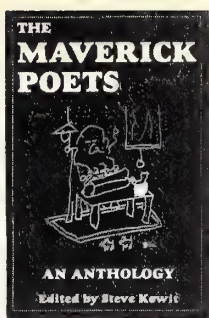
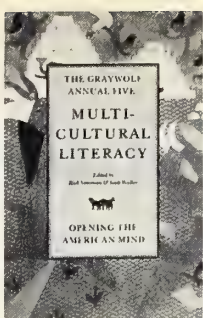
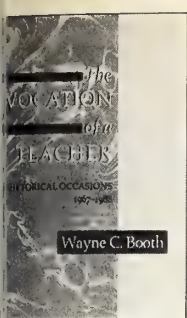
**COMMON HOUSES IN AMERICA'S SMALL TOWNS**—*The Atlantic Seaboard to the Mississippi Valley*, by John A. Jakle, Robert W. Bastian, and Douglas K. Meyer. Based on an inventory of 17,000 houses in 20

sample towns—from Apalachicola, FL to Cazenovia, NY—*Common Houses* explores how Americans house themselves in the 1980's. The authors establish a geographical field guide to the American common house, houses found at the intersection of rural and urban America. 121 photographs, 77 line illustrations, and 82 maps and charts. \$50.00, cloth; \$25.00, paper. THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PRESS.



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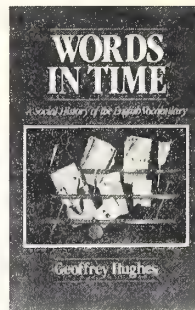
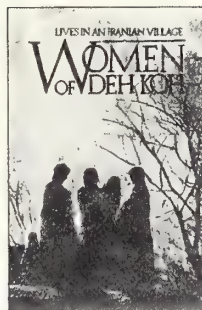
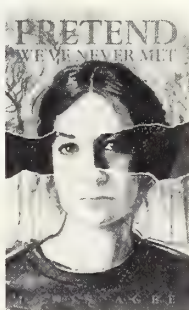
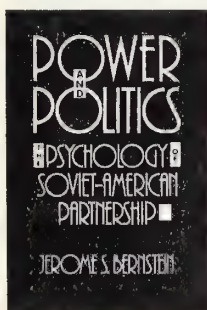


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# LETTERS

## School Days

Shelby Steele's analysis ["The Recoloring of Campus Life," February] of the "politics of difference" that have arisen between black and white students on university campuses is dead on, but his conclusion is too easy. Steele scolds universities for guiltily giving in to black students' demands for more separation, instead of helping them to achieve academic success. He urges universities to emphasize "commonality" as a higher value than pluralism. But Steele doesn't acknowledge that the notion of "common ground" has itself become a question of racial justice these days. What, exactly, ought every student who desires a liberal education read and know? Should the required "Great Books" include books by non-Western, non-white authors? Or is this pandering to diversity rather than emphasizing commonality? Stanford and the University of California at Berkeley (where I teach) were recently in an uproar about just these issues, but the battles generated more heat than light.

Steele's generation was lucky, for in the Sixties black students had not yet considered the *substance* of the university curriculum as an issue of racial justice, and thus could commit themselves wholeheartedly to running the academic race. But now the issue is not just where we enter the

race but where we are going. One problem is that those who run universities are predominantly white (as Steele acknowledges), maybe the agitation of black students for, say, the addition of a black studies department doesn't stem wholly from an inferiority complex but also arises from a deep-seated reluctance to allow university administrators and faculty to establish what commonality ought to mean for everyone.

Angela Harris  
Oakland, Calif.

Shelby Steele seeks complex events that headlines have simplified—a worthy goal—but his analysis simplifies much that is complex. One case in point is his belief that the courses offered by black, women's, and Asian studies departments should be incorporated within traditional academic disciplines. The "difference departments," he asserts, exist this because they are "too interested in the power their difference can bring." But, lest we forget, these alternative power centers originated in part because mainstream critics considered the subject matter of the "difference departments" unworthy of inclusion. And though a few feminist upstarts have fallen heavily from democratic appurtenances such as jobs and endowed chairs, the real resistance to inclusive curricula came from the mainstream critics. They may disdain separate courses in Afro-American literature, but they would rather tolerate that than a Frederick Douglass alongside of a

*Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters are subject to editing. Letters must be typed double-spaced; volume precludes individual acknowledgment.*



David Thoreau, or Zora Neale Hurston along with F. Scott Fitzgerald. It matters are otherwise on some campuses does not refute the rule.

Shan Kane  
Portland, Ore.

Shelby Steele's dismay at those students who fail to take advantage of opportunities offered at universities is justifiable. It is disingenuous, however, to equate laxity in class (not unique province of any racial or ethnic group) with political involvement on campus. Usually it's those individuals who have no interest in the world around them—the political, social, and economic realities they inherit—who make the poorest students and the most uninvolved students. The militants whom Steele condemns for wasting their time on campus activism when they "might be better off spending their time reading and studying" will probably be the most productive citizens of the future. They are the ones who are concerned about what happens in Washington and the world beyond. To imply that non-American students should be involved in the political process on campus—as Steele seems to—comes dangerously close to denying that they have a real stake as citizens in this country.

Vitt Douglas Kilgore  
Bridgwater, R.I.

Examples of "the politics of difference" pound us in the face every day, until I read Shelby Steele's essay, I noted whether anyone would dare oppose their causes and effects. I am nearly twenty-five, a member of the first generation to grow up after Martin Luther King Jr. rallied America to his dream. Steele would find me a lot like the whites described in his essay—exposed to the new age of equality since childhood, certain that "racist" feelings don't exist, yet guilt-ridden whenever they confront whites on issues of racial terms.

The "politics of difference" have blurred the most powerful notion in Martin Luther King's dream: that his children and all young Americans might be judged not

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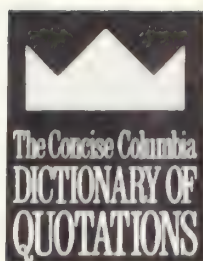
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by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. We who have grown up to cherish that dream have despaired as affirmative action—the practice of appealing to past injuries to justify present special treatment for the victims—has sowed anew the seeds of racial tension in our generation.

We despair, too, when we listen to black leaders claim King's mantle while trumpeting the "politics of difference." Other minority groups have seen the power inherent in this tactic and have split the nation a dozen ways. If we are to realize the dream, we must disavow practices that divide in the name of equality.

*Todd von Kampen*  
Des Moines, Iowa

In Shelby Steele's words, "Today's black and white college students . . . have had more opportunities to know each other than any previous generation in American history." My own experience during years of teaching is that today's white and black students understand each other only superficially. Students may interact in the school setting from pre-school through high school and still be amazingly incapable of understanding one another's responses to the world.

The understanding of cultural differences is a profound kind of learning—won only with difficulty. And for this reason, we, as a society, tend to come to accommodation rather than genuine understanding.

*John Arthos Jr.*  
[Address unknown]

The cause of resentment by white students—and taxpayers—is not hard to discover: they are tired of seeing university positions being given to people who haven't earned them, don't perform adequately when they get them, and aren't paying for them.

*George Dyke*  
Galena, Ill.

Long before they could spell "college," the young adults now in attendance at our institutions of higher learning had already received race-

related signals from their parents. University life, intellectually liberating though it may be, comes too late in the game. The die is cast in childhood and for most Americans it never be changed.

*Tom Zick*  
Hoboken, N.J.

## German Guilt?

Cynthia Ozick's "private imperative" impels her to boy Germany ["Why I Won't Go to Germany," Readings, February], she acquiesce to a perceived "principle of surrogacy." Thus, she refuse stand in for the murdered generation of German-born Jews over the age fifty. Yet she seizes on an anecdotal account to impute a surrogate culpability to today's non-Jewish Germans who are younger than fifty. She suggests that one particular woman, fifteen years after the war, is accountable for the tainted patriotism of her dier father (who was a teenager during the war) and her three war-dead cles. Indeed, she prescribes for woman a cultural meditation on the mind of her grandfather—a thegian who sent four of his sons to war.

Ozick promotes an engaged ethical "moral improvement." One won whether her belief in inherited helps her to achieve the "self-transformation" that she finds so lacking in German culture.

*Charles Hansmann*  
Briarwood, N.Y.

Cynthia Ozick's essay epitomizes the unforgiving bitterness that so Jews harbor against Germans. It become a career with some an never-ending source of material books, television shows, films, diatribes such as hers. We forget Germany perpetrated horrors against its European neighbors, invading their lands, slaughtering their armies, bombing their cities, and subjecting the conquered to a degrading, purifying occupation. If I were a Polish Frenchman, or a Russian, I would have a hard time forgiving those people who had visited such destruction upon my land. And yet we have



d these countries to forgive, and to join in multinational unions, surprisingly enough, they have.

as J. Vecchio  
yvale, Calif.

vo and amen to Cynthia Ozick.  
for those readers who will write  
plaintively admonish "forgive  
rget"—let them volunteer to go  
st Germany. We need *someone*  
eck out the chemical-war fac-

Ailsom  
Arbor, Mich.

n a German-born, Jewish survi-  
the Holocaust, and I am sad-  
that a writer of Cynthia Ozick's  
tion refuses to set foot in Ger-  
Her decision will not undo the  
aust. Nor will her resistance  
bute to resolving the scourge of  
emitism.

cannot raise the dead. But we  
nor them by working for peace  
own time.

D. Blumenthal  
fork City

## 'Em

like to pursue the now-infamous  
ative by George Bush to "read  
s," the origin of which Stan Lee  
d in the February Readings  
s Lips: A Historical Note").

an old Navy man (twenty  
, and Bush's remark struck a  
Telling sea stories is a common  
pass time on long voyages.  
telling tales, invariably some  
would break wind—perhaps be-  
we had beans for breakfast ev-  
tuesday. The retort of disgust,  
k again, sweet lips," would fol-  
thout fail.

ident Bush was once Navy. Did  
an...? Nah.

helton  
iego

## Arguing

to flog this poor old horse ad  
m [Letters, March], but I have  
e issue with Greil Marcus.  
He did not see the killing of

Meredith Hunter, a black teenager, at  
the 1969 Rolling Stones' concert in  
Altamont, and so he bases his ac-  
count of it on the report of the Ala-  
meda County grand jury's hearing  
concerning Hunter's death. What  
seems odd is that Marcus chooses to  
believe only the testimony of the one  
man—in a crowd of at least  
300,000—who said that Hunter was  
stabbed before he pulled a gun. The  
other major witnesses before the  
grand jury, among them Hunter's  
date, described the action as I ob-  
served it and the way it was captured  
by the camera of Albert Maysles [co-  
producer of the film *Gimme Shelter*]  
—with Hunter being stabbed directly  
after he pulled his pistol. God knows  
it matters not to Hunter at this date,  
but given the context of Marcus's ar-  
gument—the ethics of writing history—  
he might have concluded with the  
words "that is what one man  
said," rather than the grandiose and  
unproven "that is what actually  
happened."

Stanley Booth  
Brunswick, Ga.

## Seeing Blindness

"Gone Blind," an essay by Otto  
Friedrich in the March issue, perpet-  
uates some of the worst stereotypes  
and misconceptions about blindness.  
The journal that Friedrich kept dur-  
ing his four days of blindness, under-  
gone for medical reasons, offers an  
interesting account of the sudden loss  
of vision. The anxieties that he expe-  
rienced are shared by many newly  
blind persons, as well as their families  
and friends. But his assumptions  
about blindness are holdovers from  
the Dark Ages and should not remain  
unchallenged.

Friedrich's chronicle exemplifies  
what a sighted person *imagines* blind-  
ness to be. The blind do need help ini-  
tially in gaining the training and tools  
that will allow them to participate  
fully in society and to hold jobs ap-  
propriate to their abilities. Such train-  
ing is available. But blind persons  
wishing to work still face a high un-  
employment rate. This needless waste  
of human potential is, perhaps, large-  
ly due to ignorance and fear on the  
part of prospective employers. Frie-

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drich's journal only reinforces such fears. For example, word processing equipment that uses synthetic speech technology can free a blind writer from dependency on—to use Friedrich's dismal phrase—"some suburban stenographer."

The assumption that a blind person cannot write well is ludicrous. Some of the best writers in the Western canon wrote in spite of blindness or severe vision impairment. Even if we are not sure that there was a Homer, we do know about Milton, Joyce, Borges, and Thurber, to mention a few. On what grounds does Friedrich base his conjecture that, blind, he would be reduced to writing potboilers?

Friedrich even insinuates that thinking is impaired by loss of vision. Yet during his brief confinement, he gained new insights from the familiar material with which he passed the time.

Vision, in a poetic sense, is more than a matter of eyesight.

Joanne Lucas

Waldport, Ore.

## Inside the Cell

You would not believe how many letters I have received here in prison from all over the country regarding my piece "Poetry in Solitary" [Readings], which appeared in the March issue. They are still arriving daily. Your readers are a multitude of generous people, and I cannot possibly accept their kind offers.

But out of all the letters I've received, one stands out. It is a cry of despair from a man in a mental hospital. When I first received his strange letter I didn't know what to think. It was written in five different colored inks in a handwriting that was almost impossible to make out. I struggled through it slowly—word by word—trying to decipher its meaning, when all of a sudden I felt a tingle run up the back of my neck. I realized that across the chasm of time and space, a terribly wounded mind had written to me in a compassionate attempt to share that bond that only the imprisoned know. The demons of his mind wreaked havoc on his endeavor at self-expression. Yet there glowed a dim but unmistak-

able empathy. From a hospital thousands of miles away, a tortured soul had taken to flight. I held the letter and studied it as I paced my cell hours. Finally, unable to concentrate on anything else, I lay down on my bunk. At last I escaped into a trouble-free sleep.

But before dawn lit my cell, I woke up once. I felt that tingling sensation again and sat up in bed—in the darkness I heard a rustling and fluttering of wings outside my cell window.

Paul Ray Sheffield

Vernal, Utah

## Straight Talk for Ted

An open letter to Ted Nugent in response to his letter ["Call Me a Hunter," Readings, March]:

Dear Ted,

I've just read your letter to L. Gibbs, the animal rights activist who complained about your "slight-tering" a black bear. I couldn't fight with you more that suffering at death is nature's way. It's time the animal rights people heard our straight talk. But you didn't fight enough when you urged Gibbs to "get your fat ass out of the office" all his nature. She should walk around the Lower East Side in New York City during a bad winter. It's not just antlered deer that suffer in the cold. Talk about a "mass, slow, lingering death." I mean, let's get real for once and come out with it: Why not have a "national harvest" of the homeless?

And what about this so-called child abuse? Anyone who complains about that obviously doesn't notice what occurs in a mandrill colony. Well, I do—they're a type of child abuse—and anyone who says child abuse is unnatural is just flaunting his or her pathetic ignorance.

The point is, Ted—as you realize—there are a lot of sentimental people out there who talk about nature but wouldn't recognize it if it hit them on the nose. I feel sorry for them: their ignorance prevents them from seeing the "beautiful world of truth and experience," as you have beautifully put it. Thanks again Ted.

Richard Marshall

Otego, N.Y.



Vietnam diary  
By *Lewis H. Lapham*

Vietnam diary  
By *Lewis H. Lapham*

—Thomas Jefferson

It's possible that I've been talking to very polite people, but as yet I haven't come across anybody who is able to bear any ill will toward America and Americans. The impression is tentative and subject to change without notice. I arrived three days ago on a plane from Paris, traveling with a British television crew on a visa issued in London, and the extent of my knowledge is as meager as the selection of postcards sold by the blind woman on Tu Do Street. I don't speak French, and I'm almost always in the company of government officials. Never before having been in Vietnam, I lack secondary sources of information as well as a basis of comparison with the attitudes in effect during the war.

ven so, I'm struck by the absence of palpable resentment. Given the devastation visited upon this country by American armies over a period of forty years, I would have thought that quite a few people might express, at least retain, a feeling of bitterness. Apparently not. The Vietnamese whom I encounter in the markets, the bars, in hotel elevators and restaurants laugh at my long nose and make a point of saying that they're proud to know I'm an American. They try their musical variations of American pop (recently learned or long remembered) and tell me that they have friends, yes, or relatives, you see, in California, New York, and Louisiana. The children wear baseball caps decorated with the insignia of American corporations and T-shirts promoting Madonna and Coca-Cola. It is the

At Maxim's, by all reports the best and most expensive restaurant between Bangkok and Singapore, the tinsel signs pasted on the walls wish everybody (in English as well as Vietnamese) Happy New Year. The restaurant offers an eclectic menu (Peking duck, *steak au poivre*, sea slugs, and shark fins), and a string orchestra plays sentimental arrangements of "Yesterday," "I Just Called to Say I Love You," and the theme from *Doctor Zhivago*. The musicians never smile. On three successive nights I have listened to them play the same tunes in precisely the same sequence—as if they were assembling bicycles instead of manufacturing the pathos of the Occident.

Upstairs in the discotheque (so dark and so oddly lighted that everyone's teeth glow like phosphorus), boys and girls who don't look much older than thirteen waltz with the meticulous precision of marionettes. A Vietnamese gentleman seated at the bar, in the company of a bottle of Johnnie Walker that sells for \$7, identifies himself as "import-export" and remarks on the suppleness with which his countrymen adjust to historical circumstance. The Vietnamese, he says, have assigned the "American war" to the past—to the archive of wars that they have been fighting for 2,000 years, against the Mongols and the Chinese as well as the Japanese and the French.

The incident yesterday at Cu Chi, a town thirty miles north of the city, suggests that maybe the gentleman is right. The television crew set up a camera on the old Highway 1 where, on June 8, 1972, a young Vietnamese girl was set aflame by napalm bombs.

But where, exactly, was the same stretch of road? Our translator Mrs. Thuc, who had worked during the war for the press agency in Hanoi, questioned the villagers in the roadside houses and food stalls. The houses, most of them made of mud and thatch and sticks, backed onto rice paddies in which the new plants showed a surface of delicate but brilliant green. In the distance I could see two women walking behind water buffalo.

After about an hour, Mrs. Thuc returned with the brother of the girl in the photograph. The girl, it turned out, had survived her burns and become an official celebrity in Vietnam. Her brother, a smiling and obliging man in his early thirties, explained that she was now studying medicine in Havana. Having also been wounded in the same bombing and that killed his six-year-old brother, he remembered and recognized the scene on the road. He showed the family a photograph of the girl in the communist era. The scene proved difficult to believe, but the family was told that the girl was now a doctor.

exhorting the children to silence.

Maybe it is only the Americans who still harry themselves with the memory of the war. In Ho Chi Minh City this week I have counted no fewer than three American television crews—CBS, NBC, and PBS—assigned to the same company of American combat veterans who have been touring the country in search of answers to questions that none of them know how to ask. In my own mind I notice that the war is still present. Late at night, from a fifth-floor window of the old Caravelle Hotel, I find myself looking down into the emptiness of Lam Son Square with the absurd thought that some sort of wraith or apparition will turn up with a prepared statement. In the shadow of the opera house, I look for an army colonel, resplendent in starched uniform, bringing a bulletin from General Westmoreland's headquarters at MACV, or a *New York Times* correspondent, eager and self-important, squinting at his notes in the poor light.

February 9

In an amusement park yesterday afternoon I noticed what looked to be the hull of a wrecked Chinook helicopter, painted blue and yellow and pressed into service as a playground toy. Earlier this morning, on the roof of what was once the American embassy, I picked up a shell casing, which, conceivably, could have contained the last round fired from the last outpost of American empire in Indochina. Otherwise, except for the deformed fetuses lined up in rows on the shelves of the hospital laboratory, I can see no trace of the war. Most of the junked military equipment the Vietnamese transformed into bicycles or sold as scrap to the Japanese. The fetuses, many of them stillborn after eight or nine months in utero, continue to be collected from women suffering the effects of Agent Orange. The tiny, surreal figures stare out of glass jars displayed on three walls of a fairly large room, bearing witness to the wonders of modern military science. I saw a child with three faces superimposed on a single head, another with a large eye instead of a nose, still others with webbed feet or hands and ears

protruding from their chests.

The sequence at the embassy later that afternoon took a long time to arrange because the director wanted to match the angle of the light with the film of American helicopters lifting off the roof in April 1975. The navigational markings were still visible on the concrete, and without looking at the footage, I could still see the crowds pushing at the gate and the hands raised in futile entreaty toward the final chance of escape.

While waiting for the sun to drop nearer the horizon, I wandered through the vacant ruin of the embassy and tried to imagine the urgent comings and goings of the American officials bent on teaching the Vietnamese the lessons of democracy and forced to comfort themselves with so many shabby lies. They had to pretend that South Vietnam was an independent nation, that it was governed under the rules of proper constitutional authority, and that it had been treacherously attacked across an international border by a foreign enemy from the communist north.

Unfortunately, none of this was true. South Vietnam was manufactured in Washington, D.C., an artificial state engaged in a civil war, subject to the whim of American policy and money, ruled by a succession of second-rate politicians unable to command the loyalty or affection of the Vietnamese people.

But the American government couldn't afford to see or know anything it didn't wish to see or know. Not having much choice in the matter, the American commanders, both military and civilian, substituted the data bases of preferred fiction for the texts of inconvenient fact. Transposing the war into the currency of debits and credits, they spoke of "kill ratios" and "body counts," of "lucrative targets" and "acceptable rates of return." They defined the enemy as raw material to be processed into the commodity of victory. American soldiers were carried on the books as costs of production—like flares or radios or boxes of ammunition. Aircraft dropped bombs on symbolic map coordinates, not for any tactical reason but in order to send what the Pentagon called "bomb-o-grams" announcing Ameri-

ca's courage and resolve. What was real was the image of the war that appeared on the embassy's flowcharts and computer screens. What was not real was the experience of pain, suffering, mutilation, and death.

But now the computers were on and so were the map overlays and most of the lights. Through a web thick with cobwebs I could see the dogs playing with a rag, and I could hear, somewhere not far off, the ringing of horns and a radio playing the *Blue Danube* waltz.

Hanoi, February

On the flight north, the Air Vietnam plane (a Soviet Ilyushin) followed the curve of the Gulf of Tonkin at Mrs. Thuc, peeling oranges and announces the names of the cities at the coast—Da Nang, Hue, Quang Tri. The names remind me of old newspaper photographs of American soldiers in attitudes of exhaustion and defeat of news conferences at which presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon standing behind the same White House lectern, reading newly revised lists and statistical projections repeating, over a decade, the same false promise of imminent victory.

To my American ear the names of the Vietnamese cities expressed tragic ironies of the war, but with Mrs. Thuc I talk about the sweetness of the oranges and the winter in Hanoi. Approaching the city from the east, I can see the railroad bridge across the Red River. The landscape looks like a Chinese painting—muted and gray, the rice paddies in the foreground giving way, at just the right point of perspective, to a line of symmetrical mountains.

February

As Mrs. Thuc foretold, Hanoi has the feeling of a European city: the weather is gray and cold. The architecture is French, and the boulevards (broad and lined with trees) imitate the geometry of Paris. The people seem even poorer than the compatriots in the south, poorer and more dour. In the northern climate isn't as easy to grow rice or to talk. People ride bicycles instead of motorbikes, and the sight of a car on the street is so infrequent as to imply



...ssing of a government minister or a  
...ign diplomat, most likely a Swede  
...a Russian.

Yesterday we set up the camera on  
...grounds of what had been the gov-  
...or's palace during the years of the  
...ench dominion in Indochina. Now  
...cant, the palace stands within the  
...mal boundaries of a nineteenth-  
...century garden, about 1,000 yards  
...m the wooden house in which Ho  
...i Minh lived the last eleven years  
...what the Vietnamese government  
...s canonized as the life of a saint.  
...e obvious contrast between the  
... buildings (separated by a grape ar-  
...r, a row of poplar trees, and an or-  
...mental fish pond) is meant to be  
...derstood as a political and histori-  
...metaphor.

In 1945, the politics of the Cold  
...r in Europe persuaded America to  
...ept the burden of empire in Viet-  
...n, a country that in those days not  
... American in 10,000 would have  
...own how to find on a map. Agree-  
...to help France regain its lost colo-  
...in Indochina, the United States,  
...ween 1946 and 1954, supplied mil-  
...y assistance worth \$3 billion to a  
...ng colonial war. The Americans  
...d for the French defeat and gained  
...return, much to their eventual sor-  
...e, a sense of ideological mission.  
...gining that we were protecting all  
...Southeast Asia against a global  
...munist conspiracy, we invented  
...specious domino theory, in part to  
...lain why a democratic republic  
...suppressing a war of indepen-  
...ce, in part to justify the gift of  
...merican idealism to a cause that was  
...h futile and unjust.

Built along the lines of a peasant's  
...use in the central highlands of  
...nam, Ho's house consists of two  
...ms, a bedroom and a study, both  
...rsely furnished. The rooms are  
...ed on stilts; directly below, in the  
...n space where the peasant would  
...e kept his animals, there was a  
...n wooden table, maybe eight feet  
...g, and eleven wooden chairs.  
...m this table (so said Mrs. Thuc),  
...and his advisers ran the war  
...inst the United States, drawing  
...ir plans with the stubs of school-  
...m pencils.

The simplicity of Ho's military  
...quarters conforms to a percep-

tion of the Vietnam War that turned a  
...generation of Americans against their  
...own government. On one side a few  
...small men, poor and thinly clothed,  
...seated among flowering trees; on the  
...other side the technological splendor  
...of the Pentagon and a regiment of  
...generals, heavily decorated with gold  
...braid, talking to themselves in air-  
...conditioned rooms.

Prior to the defeat in Vietnam,  
...most Americans had been content to  
...think of themselves as honorable peo-  
...ple, unerringly drawn to the side of

what was true and noble and right—  
...not the kind of people to push women  
...and children away from the last heli-  
...copter out of town. If the war proved  
...them wrong in this judgment, it was  
...because the war was never honestly  
...declared and because, at the end of it,  
...nobody, certainly none of its official  
...sponsors, could say why 58,000  
...American soldiers were dead and an-  
...other 300,000 wounded. What could  
...be said was that America had lost not  
...only a war but also the belief in its  
...virtue.

## IN THE DARK ABOUT WHO'S LOWEST IN TAR AND NICOTINE?



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# HARPER'S INDEX

- Estimated increase in Latin America's debt burden each time U.S. interest rates increase 1 percent : \$3,400,000,000
- Rank of Venezuela, among Latin American nations, in the amount of foreign debt it has retired since 1983 : 1
- Number of years it would take to pay off the U.S. national debt at the rate of \$10,000 per minute : 521
- Amount of U.S. aid to El Salvador since 1980, per minute : \$681
- Rank of Henry Kissinger, Alexander Haig, and Elliott Abrams, in number of *Nightline* appearances since 1985 : 1,2,3
- Percentage of *Nightline* programs about terrorism, broadcast since 1985, that dealt with the Middle East : 90
- Percentage of international acts of terrorism since 1985 that took place in the Middle East : 43
- Chances that a Palestinian male in the occupied territories has been arrested at least once since 1979 : 1 in 10
- Total number of deaths resulting from the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since December 1987 : 432
- Total number of homicides in Washington, D.C., since December 1987 : 512
- Ratio of teenage victims of homicide to teenage suicides in the United States : 1:1
- Percentage of Japanese 16- to 18-year-olds who say they "worry very much about almost everything" : 73
- Percentage of Japanese overseas development assistance in 1987 that was tied to the purchase of Japanese goods : 28
- Percentage of U.S. overseas development assistance in 1987 that was tied to the purchase of American goods : 55
- Rank of Japan, among all countries, in spending on non-military foreign aid this year : 1
- Estimated market value of all real estate in Tokyo : \$8,000,000,000,000
- Estimated market value of all real estate and public corporations in the United States : \$8,000,000,000,000
- Estimated number of acres of residential lawn in the United States : 20,000,000
- Percentage of Iowans who have lawn ornaments : 24
- Estimated number of charcoal briquettes sold last year : 17,500,000,000
- Percentage of American barbequers who combine microwave cooking with outdoor grilling : 48
- Rank of May, among all months, in number of tornadoes : 1
- Estimated rate at which rain would have to fall to re-create the flood described in Genesis, in feet per hour : 15
- Chances that a monkey with a typewriter will type *Hamlet* : 1 in 35<sup>200,000</sup>
- Chances that a monkey will type *Bright Lights*, *Big City* : 1 in 35<sup>300,000</sup>
- World's record for the most footnotes in a law review article : 4,824
- Total number of black spots drawn by Disney animators for *101 Dalmatians* : 6,469,952
- U.S. sales of licensed Roger Rabbit merchandise since the movie's release last June : \$200,000,000
- Sales of licensed California Raisin merchandise in North America last year : \$450,000,000
- Sales of California raisins in North America last year : \$400,000,000
- Rank of Portland, Oregon, among all U.S. cities, in per capita consumption of Grape-Nuts : 1
- Rank of Salt Lake City, among all U.S. cities, in per capita consumption of Cracker Jack : 1
- Number of artists-in-residence at the New York City Department of Sanitation : 1
- Number of pages in Andy Warhol's 71-page FBI file that have not been released : 3
- Estimated number of galleries that have exhibited paintings and prints by Tony Bennett in the last 10 years : 1
- Amount given to Florida State University to endow the Burt Reynolds Eminent Scholar Chair : \$1,000,000
- Number of months Charles Nelson Reilly has held the chair : 1
- Number of honorary degrees held by Frank Sinatra : 3
- By Sammy Davis Jr. : 4
- By Dean Martin : 0

# GENERATING MORE THAN ELECTRICITY

By Bob Bergland

**I'm an optimist** about people power.

Maybe that's because I see so many people in rural communities—areas often left behind while the rest of the country prospers—harnessing their can-do spirit to pump new life into their local economy.

In one area of west Texas, for example, the manager of Midwest Electric Co-op in Fisher County and other community leaders simply weren't willing to watch their economy deteriorate and their population dwindle. So they did something about it.

They formed an economic commission, and projects to revive local assets—like restoring historic Main Street storefronts—were put into motion. They brought in new business and provided the professional services needed to support commercial development. Today, with a new livestock processing plant, a business “incubator,” and other signs of growth, parents and youngsters look at their hometown with a whole new vision.

**Fisher County's story is not unique.** Neither is the leadership provided by the electric co-op

there. In fact, there are 1,000 rural electric systems in 46 states, helping communities cope with challenging conditions. These electric co-ops, owned by the people they serve, provide the leadership and resources needed to strengthen community foundations.

In Alabama, a local co-op has helped build and operate a water system for several thousand people. A sporting goods plant in

South Dakota was saved when a co-op manager found a buyer for the facility. In Vermont, a languishing farming community built a ski village and training center with a co-op's help. Co-ops in Wisconsin formed an organization to rebuild homes and businesses after natural disasters. The list goes on and on.

**These are powerful examples** of leadership and cooperation in generating local economic growth. And by bringing growth to the rural economy, rural electric systems are generating more than electricity . . . they are strengthening the nation's economic foundation.



*Bob Bergland is Executive Vice President of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*



**America's Consumer-Owned Rural Electric Systems**

*A Power In The Land.*



# READINGS

[Essay]

## SACRED TRUTH, NOVELISTIC TRUTHS

*From "Words Apart," by Carlos Fuentes, in the February 24 issue of the Guardian, a British daily. Fuentes's speech "Uncle Sam, Stay Home" appeared in the January issue of Harper's Magazine. Fuentes lives in Mexico City.*

**M**ikhail Bakhtin was probably the greatest theorist of the novel in our century. His life, in a way, is as exemplary as his books. Shunted off to remote areas of the Soviet Union by the minions of Stalinism for his unorthodox ideas, Bakhtin could not profit from rehabilitation when it came under Brezhnev, simply because he had never been accused of anything. A victim of faceless intolerance, his political nemesis was Stalin, but his literary symbol was Kafka.

His case was and is not unique. I have thought a lot about Bakhtin while thinking about Salman Rushdie during these past few weeks. Rushdie's work perfectly fits the Bakhtinian contention that ours is an age of competitive language. The novel is the privileged arena where languages in conflict can meet, bringing together in tension and dialogue not only opposing characters but also different historical ages, social levels, civilization, and other realities of human life. In the novel, realities that are normally separated can meet, establishing a dialogic encounter, a meeting with the other.

This is no gratuitous exercise. It reveals a number of things. The first is that in dialogue no one is absolutely right: neither speaker holds an absolute truth or, indeed, has an absolute hold over history. Myself and the other, as well as the history that both of us are making, are unfinished. The novel, by its very nature, indicates that we are becoming. There is no final solution. There is no last word.

This is what Milan Kundera means when he proposes that the novel is a constant redefini-

tion of men and women as problems, never as sealed, concluded truths. But this is precisely what the ayatollahs of this world cannot suffer. For the ayatollahs, reality is dogmatically defined once and for all in a sacred text. But a sacred text is, by definition, a completed and exclusive text. You can add nothing to it. It does not converse with anyone. It is its own loudspeaker. It offers perfect refuge for the insecure who then, having the protection of a dogmatic text over their heads, proceed to excommunicate those whose security lies in their search for the truth. I remember Luis Buñuel saying: "I would give my life for a man who is looking for the truth. But I would gladly kill a man who thinks that he has found the truth."

This surrealist sally is now being dramatically acted out in reverse. An author who is looking for the truth has been condemned to death by a priestly hierarchy whose deep insecurity is disguised by its pretension to holding the truth.

The ayatollahs, nevertheless, have done a great service to literature, if not to Islam. Though they have debased and caricatured their own faith, they have shifted the wandering attention of the world to the power of words, literature, and the imagination, in ways totally unforeseen by their philosophy. The intolerance of the ayatollahs not only sheds light on Salman Rushdie and his uses of the literary imagination but, by declaring the imagination so dangerous that it deserves capital punishment, the sectarians have made possible where wonder what it is that is so powerful and, indeed, so dangerous.

I have always conceived of the novel (and those I try to write) as a cross between the individual and the culture, the man and women. Both are necessary, but both only sayable in the novel. It is standable if it is first of all a fiction, truth is too pre-established, and both of us are too mortal. There is no other way.

plore the possibilities of our unfinished humanity. No other way to refuse the death of the past, making it present through memory. No other way of effectively giving life to the future, through the manifestation of our desire.

That these essential activities of the human spirit should be denied in the name of a blind yet omniscient, paralytical yet actively homicidal, dogmatism is both a farce and a crime in itself. Salman Rushdie has done the true religious spirit a service by brilliantly imagining the tensions and complements that it establishes with the secular spirit. Humor, certainly, cannot be absent, since there is no contemporary language that can utter itself without a sense of the diversification of that same language. When we all understood everything, the epic was pos-

sible. But not fiction. The novel is born from the very fact that we do not understand one another any longer, because unitary, orthodox language has broken down. Quixote and Sancho, the Shandy brothers, Mr. and Mrs. Karenin: their novels are the comedy (or the drama) of their misunderstandings. Impose a unitary language: you kill the novel, but you also kill the society.

After what has happened to Salman Rushdie and *The Satanic Verses*, I hope that everyone now understands this. Fiction is not a joke. It is but an expression of the cultural, personal, and spiritual diversity of mankind. Fiction is a harbinger of a multipolar and multicultural world, where no single philosophy, no single belief, no single solution, can shunt aside the extreme wealth of mankind's cultural heritage. Our future depends on expanding the freedom of the multiracial and the polycultural to express themselves in a world of shifting, decaying, and emerging power centers.

The defense of Salman Rushdie is a defense of ourselves. It is a matter of pride to say that Rushdie has given us all a better reason to understand and protect the profession of letters at the highest level of creativity, imagination, intelligence, and social responsibility.

[Brochure Photograph]

## IF ONLY OLLIE'D HAD ONE



From a brochure for document "disintegrators" manufactured by Security Engineered Machinery, of Westborough, Massachusetts. According to the brochure, the model pictured above "easily destroys huge volumes of sensitive data" by cutting them into irregularly shaped confetti. The machine, which is designed for government offices, Pentagon contractors, and other businesses, sells for \$175,000.

[Book Excerpt]

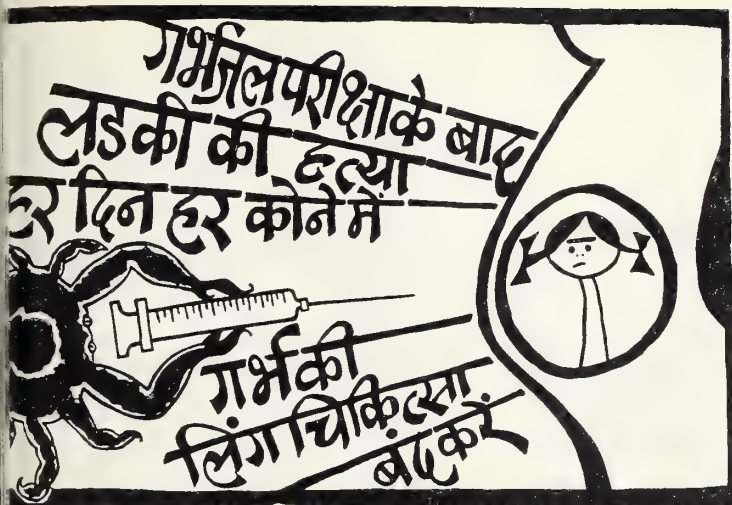
## JUST SAY NO, BILL

From the introduction to *High Culture: Marijuana in the Lives of Americans*, by William Novak, published by Knopf in 1980. Novak, the co-author of *Iacocca* and *Man of the House*, Tip O'Neill's autobiography, was recently signed to co-author Nancy Reagan's memoirs.

For me, marijuana has been an intellectual stimulant, serving as a useful tool in breaking down certain conceptual boundaries and categories that, I now see, kept out more light than they let in. Marijuana also presented a different version of reality than the one I was used to. Sometimes, when I have been high, I have felt like a visitor to another land, a land both familiar and new at the same time, only inches and moments away from the land I normally inhabit, but also remote—and uncharted on any map I have consulted.

During these visits I have often wanted to take notes, to be sent back as postcards to myself in the places I have temporarily left behind. Sometimes the message on the postcard is a simple greeting or a knowing smile. At other times it is a feeling or an insight I want to preserve and





<sup>1</sup> "Sex Selection in India: Girls as a Bad Investment," an article by Les Levidow, in premiere issue of *Science as Culture*, a quarterly published by Free Association Press, in London. This poster was created by the Forum Against Sex Determination and Sex Pre-Selection Techniques, in Bombay; it reads: ONCE THE WOMAN BECOMES PREGNANT, AFTER DETERMINATION OF THE SEX, EVERYWHERE THERE IS MURDER OF THE FEMALE. LET'S STOP SEX DETERMINATION. The group lobbies against the use of amniocentesis for sex selection, a practice common among Bombay's gynecologists. After a fetus is determined to be female, it is often aborted.

remember, or perhaps a fresh way of seeing a familiar object, idea, or person. Occasionally, the postcard might describe an experience or an encounter lived deeply and intensely. And sometimes the message is a brief one saying, "Hey, when you get back to the world you normally occupy, try to recall some of what you saw and felt and understood while you were here."

[Correspondence]

## SENSE AND ETYMOLOGY IN SETTLERS' ENGLISH

*From correspondence between Dan Quayle and William A. Llewellyn, president of Merriam-Webster. The letters were written in April 1987 but were released only recently by the Vice President's office in response to requests from the press.*

Dear Mr. Llewellyn:

It has recently come to my attention that Webster's *Third New International Dictionary* contains a rather disparaging and unflattering definition of the word "hoosier."

As you may be aware, Hoosiers are natives or inhabitants of the state of Indiana, which I am

honored to represent in the U.S. Senate.

Describing a Hoosier as someone who was born or raised in Indiana, however, is but one of three definitions in Webster's. I would like to call to your attention the dictionary's other two definitions of hoosier.

1. Used as a noun, "an awkward, unhandy, or unskilled person; esp. an ignorant rustic."

2. Used as a verb, "to loaf on or botch a job."

In addition, Hoosier is one of the oldest nicknames in this country and the debate over its origin and true meaning has a very long history. Among the more popular theories:

□ When a visitor knocked on the door of a pioneer cabin in Indiana, the settler would respond "Who's yere?" Why settlers in Indiana, and nowhere else, would respond in this fashion isn't clear.

□ Because Indiana river men were so successful in trouncing, or "hushing," their adversaries in brawls, the state's inhabitants became known as "hushers."

□ James Whitcomb Riley facetiously claimed that Indiana's early settlers were "hoosers" who bit off noses and ears in the night. Thus the phrase "Whose ear!" was heard in taverns the morning after such parties.

Granted, the most common definition of hoosier is the one put forth by Indiana's first settler, John Jacob Piatt Dunn, who claimed the word "hoozer" from his own vocabulary of the woodsman and others who settled the state.

ern hills of Indiana.

One thing is certain, however: Hoosiers now bear their nickname with pride, regardless of its origin.

Nowhere in my great state will you find someone who considers a Hoosier an awkward, unhandy, unskilled, or ignorant rustic.

And I doubt very much that you'll find a constituent of mine who believes for a second that to hoosier is to "loaf on or botch a job."

At any rate, I would ask that you review your description of the word hoosier and, if possible, alter it to reflect either common usage of the word today or, short of that, the long history of debate over its meaning and origin.

Sincerely,  
Dan Quayle  
U.S. Senator

Dear Senator Quayle:

Many thanks for your letter concerning the definitions of "hoosier" in our *Webster's Third*

*New International Dictionary*, and I want to assure you immediately that there is nothing in that book which should be taken to mean that inhabitants of the state of Indiana are inherently awkward or rustic or anything like that.

It is true that this unabridged dictionary shows two senses for the noun hoosier, one of which uses those unflattering terms, but those have to be seen as two different words, not as two definitions for a resident of Indiana. There are tens of thousands of words in the book having multiple senses.

As to your suggestion that we include in the dictionary a complete etymological history of the debate over the meaning and origin of the word hoosier, let me say that there are specialized dictionaries where such a discussion could be valuable and appropriate. The unabridged dictionary, however, contains approximately 470,000 entries and already weighs nearly fifteen pounds. If we were to include such a discussion for the word hoosier, then we would be obligated to do so for all the other words entered, and that clearly would be an enormous task resulting in an unusable book.

The good news is that dictionary makers do not truly define words. Rather, they record the language as it is used. What this means is that if you use the word hoosier to mean quick, smart, skillful, etc., and others use the word in the same sense in edited text, then in time it will begin to appear in dictionaries in that sense, and no one would be more delighted than we.

Yours sincerely,  
W. A. Llewellyn  
President

[Letter]

## THE CHOLESTEROL LOBBY FIGHTS BACK

*From a letter sent by Louis B. Raffel, president of the American Egg Board, to Robin Sweeny, the mayor of Sausalito, California. The letter, dated December 9, 1988, was written after Sausalito declared itself a "cholesterol-free zone."*

Dear Mayor Sweeny:

I saw in *USA Today* that Sausalito has declared itself a cholesterol-free city.

The article did not indicate if you were talking about blood cholesterol or dietary cholesterol. If you want Sausalito to be a blood-cholesterol-free city, you will have to remove the livers of all the citizens, because blood cholesterol is manufactured in the body.

If you are talking about dietary cholesterol, you are not helping public awareness. You are only adding to public confusion, because dietary cholesterol is not the major cause of increased blood-cholesterol levels.

Perhaps Sausalito should stick to being a beautiful city by the Bay and leave the health advice to the professionals.

Louis B. Raffel  
President

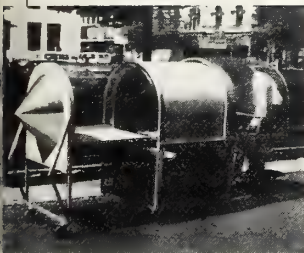
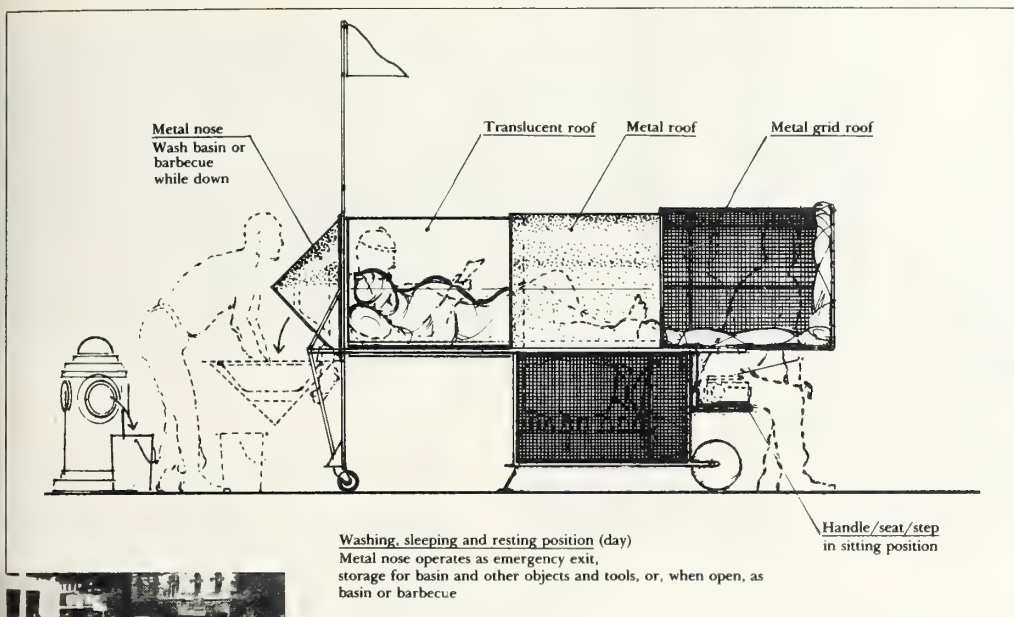
[Clipping]

## HOMELESS CHIC

*From "Past as Prologue," by Ruth La Ferla, published in the "Men's Style" column of the New York Times Magazine on February 19, 1989.*

"You can't sit in a room and expect to come up with a collection," says Lance Karesh, the designer for Basco, the eleven-year-old sportswear firm in which Karesh is teamed up with Gene Pressman, an executive vice president of Barneys New York. The firm reissues old-time classics in a contemporary guise. "New York is a gold mine of style," Karesh says as he cruises uptown in a taxi. At that moment, as if to underscore his point, a vagrant appears at the intersection. He wears castoffs—a sea green, fake-fur overcoat, a frayed tweed sports jacket, a





From "Homeless Vehicle Project," by Krzysztof Wodiczko and David V. Lurie, in the Winter 1988 October, a quarterly published by MIT Press. This sketch, by Wodiczko, is a design for a "shelter vehicle" for the homeless people in New York City who subsist by redeeming the deposits on discarded cans and bottles. The metal and Plexiglas vehicle is intended to provide shelter and transportation, while contributing to a "legitimized status for its users in the community of the city." Working with the homeless in New York, Wodiczko is currently testing a prototype; he will exhibit it at the Centre Pompidou in Paris this month.

cardigan, and a close-fitting hood—with enviable élan. Karesh is riveted, taking in every nuance. There's no telling where his next idea may come from.

[Prospectus]

## PROSTITUTION GOES PUBLIC

From the prospectus for a public stock offering made in February by Mustang Ranch, which operates two brothels in Nevada. American Wallstreet Securities, Inc., the underwriter for the offering, has received orders for 75 percent of the stock. The stock is being sold for \$20 a share and will trade on the NASDAQ exchange.

**T**he securities offered hereby are Shares of the Common Stock, par value \$.01 per Share, of Mustang Ranch Inc. (the "Company").

The Company is only recently organized for the express purpose of acquiring a leasehold interest in certain real property located near Reno, Nevada, which is the site of two operat-

ing brothels commonly known as "Mustang Ranch #1" and "Mustang Ranch #2" (the "Brothels").

### RISK FACTORS

*Nature of Business.* The nature of the business in which the Company plans to engage through the operation of the Brothels is primarily that of providing a facility for the practice of legalized prostitution by female independent contractors (the "Independent Contractors"). There are substantial risks involved with such business, including the following:

*Sexually Transmittable Diseases—Publicity.* With the level of publicity relating to sexually transmittable diseases having increased substantially in recent years, particularly the public dealing with AIDS, a substantial risk exists in the opinion of many potential customers that Independent Contractors will be reluctant to become customers, thereby reducing the business interests of the Company.

*Sexually Transmittable Diseases—Independent Contractors.* The Company's rules of the Brothel require that an Independent Contractor from performing a male customer without the

tractor first having performed a visual physical examination of the customer (particularly the customer's genitalia) to detect any indications of a sexually transmittable disease, and require that no sexual act be performed by an Independent Contractor without the customer's use of a condom, the company will have no means of assuring that an Independent Contractor will comply with such rules with every customer.

#### BROTHEL OPERATIONS

The Brothels are licensed boarding houses at which the Independent Contractors, as female prostitutes, make available their services for the performance of sexual acts with male customers. Independent Contractors will not be recruited by the Company. A prospective Independent Contractor who desires to conduct business as a prostitute on the premises of the Brothels must personally appear at the Brothels and offer to enter into an agreement with the Company.

Negotiations concerning the services in the form of sexual acts desired by customers and the prices to be paid to Independent Contractors for the performance of such services will not involve representatives of the Company. The price negotiated by an Independent Contractor for any particular sexual act with a customer will be entirely within the control of the Independent Contractor.

Payment for agreed-upon services will be required from the customer in advance of the Independent Contractor's performance of such services. Payment may be made in cash or with a major credit card. When payment is received by the Independent Contractor, she will "log in" by (a) delivering the payment of the customer to the Brothel's cashier, (b) explaining the agreement with the customer which will be recorded in writing by the cashier, and (c) providing the Brothel's cashier with an estimate of the time which will be required to perform the agreed-upon services.

Prior to commencing the performance of the agreed-upon services, the Independent Contractor will be required to perform a visual physical examination of the customer (particularly the genitalia of the customer) to attempt to determine the presence of any indication that the customer may be infected with or the carrier of any sexually transmittable disease. If any indication of a sexually transmittable disease or intravenous drug usage is detected, an Independent Contractor will be required by "house" rules to cancel the agreement with her customer for the performance of any sexual act and arrange with the Brothel's cashier for a full refund of the payment made by the customer.

The services and perquisites provided to the Independent Contractors by the Company will

be consistent with (or an improvement of) those provided by the present owners of the Brothels. The room and boarding fee paid by the Independent Contractors will include payment for all meals of the Independent Contractors prepared in the restaurant-style kitchen which the Company will maintain and staff at the Brothels; hairstyling, manicures, pedicures, facials, and other beauty treatments in the Brothels' salon facilities; laundry services; and maid service.

#### CERTIFICATES

Each investor who purchases a minimum of 1,500 Shares of the Common Stock will be issued a Commemorative Certificate, which is a full-size (approximately 33 by 43 inches), collector's quality serigraph reproduction of the original art which has been completed by LeRoy Neiman, specifically for these Commemorative Certificates.

[Letter]

## WHEN YOU VISIT PRAGUE

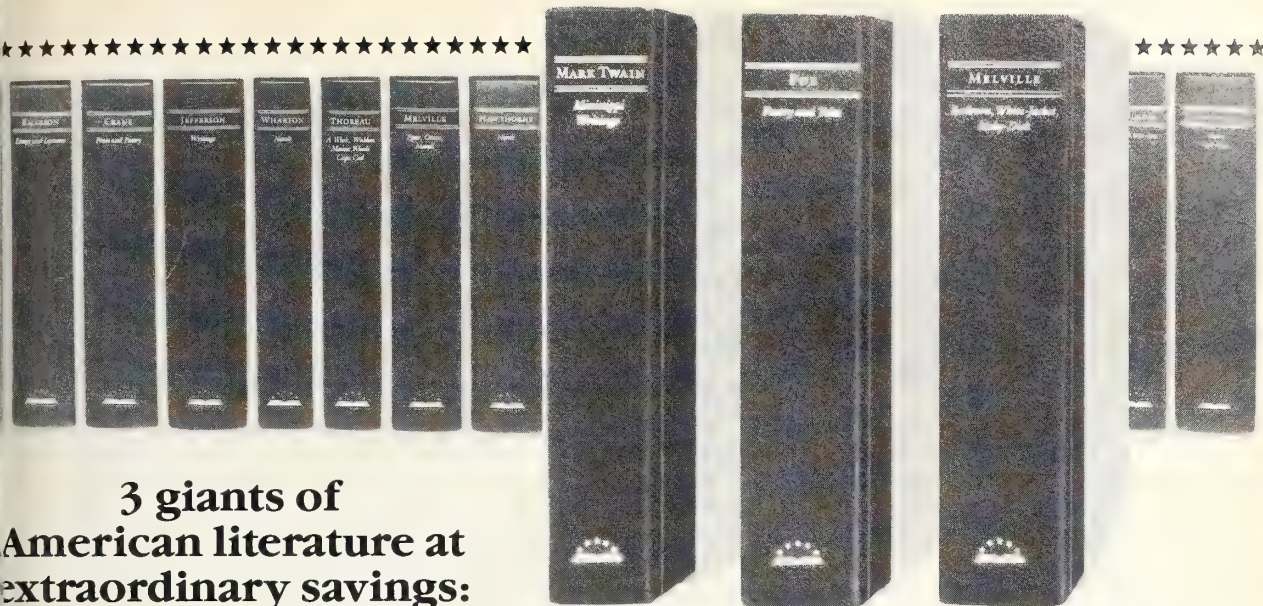
*From a letter written by the Czech playwright Václav Havel to François Mitterrand on the eve of the French president's visit to Czechoslovakia last December. This letter was Havel's last written public statement before his arrest in January for "incitement" and "obstructing public order." He is currently serving an eight-month jail sentence. The letter was released by PEN.*

Dear Mr. President,

I am addressing you prior to your upcoming visit to Czechoslovakia because I would like, at least briefly, to inform you of the unfortunate situation in our country, and ask you to keep it in mind and discuss it openly with our representatives in Prague.

Many Western politicians come to our country with the subconscious thought that they will encounter the "cut-in-the-rough" faces of dull dictators. They are, of course, pleasantly surprised, almost charmed, when they are welcomed by the smiling, shaved faces of fashionably dressed and thoroughly kind people who talk about the long-lasting friendship with their visitor's country, about their deep interest in mutual cooperation, about their desire for peaceful coexistence, and about their most sincere desire to improve the situation in Czechoslovakia and to expand freedom and democracy. It is no doubt a joyful experience to listen to all





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[illegible]



this, and it is easy to believe it.

I am far from suspecting you of political naïveté. However, since I consider your visit very important, but fear that it may be manipulated by our leadership as proof of your respect for their policies, I feel a need once again to underscore the sad discrepancy between the face that our leaders show to their Western guests and the face that they show at home. In case my words are superfluous, so much the better.

Compared with the policies of the Soviet, Hungarian, or even Polish government, the policies of the Czech leadership are unusually conservative. It is true that our leaders are talking about "rebuilding" and "democratization," but this rhetoric merely clothes the old totalitarian way of ruling in a more modern, fashionable garment. Although in other countries of the Soviet bloc it is possible to discern a will to change at least some things, in Czechoslovakia the moral, social, economic, and environmental crises are only deepening. Life in our country is empty, unfree, and oppressive. The everyday components of the crises are subtle, but the cumulative effect is a thorough humiliation of man. Our rulers resolutely refuse any dialogue with society and desperately believe that they can postpone the final catastrophe toward which these crises inevitably lead.

I am sure that you have at your disposal evidence of the situation that I am describing here. I firmly believe that as the leader of a country with a long democratic tradition, a country that is a symbol of a truly free spirit, you will not be silent about all that is happening in today's Czechoslovakia and that you will not show support for the "justification" and the "meaningfulness" of the policies of today's Czechoslovakian leadership.

Sincerely yours,  
Václav Havel

[Memoir]

## GRANDPA ISAAK

*From Ours: A Russian Family Album, by Sergei Dovlatov, published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson. Dovlatov lives in New York City. Translated from the Russian by Anne Frydman.*

**M**y great-grandfather Moses was a peasant from the village of Sukhovo. To be a Jew and a peasant was a rather rare mixture, I would note, but such things did occur in the Far East.

His son Isaak moved to the city, which is to say he restored the more usual state of affairs.

At first he lived in Harbin, which is where my father was born. Then he settled on one of the central streets of Vladivostok.

At first my grandfather repaired watches and any kind of household appliance. Then he worked at printing. He was something like a layout man. Then in two years' time he bought his own delicatessen on the city's main boulevard, the Svetlanka.

A wine store under the sign NECTAR, BALSAM opened next door, owned by a certain Zamaraev. My grandfather often dropped by to pay him a friendly call. The two would have a drink together and converse on philosophical themes. Then they would go over to Grandfather's store to have a bite of something tasty. Then they would go back to Zamaraev's...

"You're a man with soul," Zamaraev would say, "even if you are a Jew."

"I'm only a Jew on my father's side," Grandfather would say. "On my mother's side I'm a Dutchman."

"Well, what do you know!" Zamaraev said approvingly.

In a year's time they had drunk up everything in the wine store and eaten out the delicatessen.

An aged Zamaraev left to go live with his sons in Ekaterinograd. As for my grandfather, he went off to war. The Japanese campaign had begun.

During one troop inspection he was noticed by the Czar himself. Grandpa was almost seven feet in height. He could put an entire apple in his mouth. His mustache drooped down to his rifle sling.

The Czar came up close to Grandpa. Then, with a smile, he poked him in the chest with his finger.

Grandpa was immediately transferred to the Guards. He must have been the only Semite there. He was assigned to an artillery battery. If a horse gave out from exhaustion, Grandpa would drag the cannon through the swamp.

Once the battery took part in a battle. Grandpa was in the front line of the attack. An armed detachment was supposed to cover the frontline soldiers. However, most of the guns were silent. My grandfather's back, it turned out, had blocked their view of the enemy.

Grandpa returned home from the front with a .375-caliber rifle and a few medals. It seems he even got a Georgevsky Cross.

He lived it up for a week. Then he took a job as the maître d'hôtel in the Edem eating establishment. Once it happened that he quarreled with an incompetent waiter. He began to roar. Banged his fist on a table. The fist ended up in a desk drawer.

My grandfather did not like disorder. For that reason, he held a negative view of the Revolu-



tion. More than that, he even slowed its progress a little. It happened like this.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, masses of people from the outskirts of town began rushing toward the center of the city. Grandpa thought it was a pogrom against the Jews. He got out his rifle and went up to the roof. When the crowds were near he began firing into the air. He was the only inhabitant of Vladivostok to oppose the Revolution. Nevertheless, the Revolution won out. The great mass of people made it to the center of town by the alleyways.

After the Revolution, Grandpa calmed down. He became a modest craftsman once again. There were still times, though, when he drew attention to himself. In one such instance, he damaged the reputation of an American firm called Merkher, Merkher and Co.

This American firm was importing collapsible beds into the Far East by way of Japan, though they were only called "collapsible beds" considerably later. At the time they were a sensational novelty, sold under the name of "The Magic Bed." The beds looked about the same as they do now: colorful sailcloth, mattress, springs, aluminum frame...

My progressive grandfather made his way to the trade center. A bed had been set up on a special raised platform.

"The American firm now demonstrates this novelty for you!" the salesman cried. "The bachelor's dream! Indispensable for travel! Comfort and luxury! Does anyone wish to try it?"

"I wish," my grandfather said. He pulled off his boots without unlacing them and lay down.

There was a loud crack, and the springs sang out. Grandpa found himself on the floor.

With an unperturbed smile, the salesman opened another floor sample. The same sounds were heard. Grandpa cursed under his breath and rubbed his back.

The salesman opened a third collapsible bed.

This time the springs held. The aluminum legs, however, gave way in silence. Grandpa made a soft landing.

Soon the hall was littered with the wreckage of wonder beds. Tatters of colorful canvas drooped on the floor, twisted frames gleamed dimly.

After some haggling, Grandpa bought a sandwich and went home.

The reputation of the American firm was severely damaged. Merkher, Merkher and Co. began trading in crystal chandeliers.

Grandpa Isaak ate a great deal. He sliced thick loaves of bread not crosswise but lengthwise. When he and Grandma Raya were invited out to dinner, Grandma was always blushing on account of him. Before leaving, Grandpa was

fed a full meal. This did not help. He ate slabs of bread folded in half. He drank vodka out of glasses for cream soda. When the hostess was clearing the table for dessert, he would ask that the aspics stay. Arriving back home, he would sit down for supper with a sigh of relief...

Grandpa had three sons. The youngest, Leopold, went off to China when he was just a young man. From there he went to Belgium.

The two elder sons, Mikhail and Donat, were inclined toward the arts. They left provincial Vladivostok behind them and settled in Leningrad. Grandpa and Grandma soon followed.

The sons married. Against the backdrop of their father, the sons seemed puny and helpless. Both daughters-in-law were rather taken with Grandpa.

He got himself a job working as something like a manager for a housing office. Evenings he repaired watches and hot plates. As before, he

[Scratch and Sniff Ad]

## OBSESSION



This advertisement is manufactured by the... this year in... In the actual... odor of... explosion



From *Playing Fast and Loose With Time and Space*, a collection of cartoons by P.S. Mueller, published by Meadowbrook Press.

was extremely strong.

It happened once in Shcherbakov Lane that a truck driver insulted him, probably calling him something like "kike face." Grandpa grabbed the side of the moving truck and stopped it. He pushed aside the driver who had jumped out of the cab. Then he lifted the truck by its bumper and turned it on its side crosswise, in the middle of the road.

The headlights of the truck rested against a bathhouse. The back end lay in the flower beds of Shcherbakov Square.

Once he realized what had happened, the driver began to weep. He alternately cried and threatened.

"I'll jack it back up!" he said.

"Go ahead and try," Grandpa told him.

The truck blocked the lane for two days. Then a derrick was called to take it away.

"Why didn't you just punch him in the jaw?" my father asked.

Grandpa thought about this and said, "I was afraid I'd get carried away."

As I've already said, his youngest son, Leopold, had settled in Belgium. Once a man he knew there visited the USSR and came to see the family. He was called Monya. Monya brought Grandpa a tuxedo and a huge inflatable giraffe. The giraffe, it turned out, was really a hat rack.

Monya railed against capitalism, was enthusi-

astic about socialist industry, then went home. Soon afterwards, Grandpa was arrested and charged with being a Belgian spy. He was given ten years without correspondence privileges. What this really meant was that he was shot. Anyway, he would never have survived ten years in prison camp. Hunger is hard for a healthy man to endure, arbitrary rule and brutality even more so . . .

More than twenty years later, my father, after a long effort, had Grandpa's name rehabilitated "for lack of corpus delicti."

For me the question is, just what was going on back then? For the sake of what, exactly, was that delightfully senseless and amusing life cut off?

I often think of my grandfather, though I never knew him. For instance, if one of my friends says with surprise, "How can you drink rum out of a teacup?" I immediately think of Grandpa.

Or my wife might say to me, "Tonight we're going to the Dombrovskys for supper. We should get you something to eat beforehand." Again, he comes to mind.

He also came to my mind when I was in a prison cell . . .

I have a few photographs of Grandpa. When my grandchildren leaf through the family album, it will be easy for them to mistake us for one another.



[Essay]

## ELEVATE OR ESCALATE?

From "Chicago, Opening Day," an essay about department stores, by Jerry Herron, that appeared in the Winter issue of *Raritan*, a quarterly journal published at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Herron teaches English at Wayne State University in Detroit.

**E**levator or escalator? The elevators at Marshall Field's are the old-fashioned kind that look like enormous, ritzy telephone booths. They're not the conveyance of choice today, though. Most people take the escalator. Escalators are slower, but they make more sense. Just like the stairs that it imitates, the escalator's purpose is narrative, and didactic. It moves the passenger through time, and as that movement proceeds, the meaning of each selling floor, each "story," emerges naturally, like the gradual development of plot in a novel. The grids that define the space of each floor—invisible at ground level—become manifest as the trip into omniscience progresses. As the escalator passenger ascends, nearing the ceiling, each passing floor takes on the appearance of a city looked at from the air, or represented by a map. Such mastery is denied the elevator passenger, who never understands where he has been and, as a result, frequently gets confused: "Where are we? Is this the right floor?"

Historically speaking, the elevator preceded the escalator by about fifty years, and given a choice, shoppers were glad to abandon the stairs, though not without serious results. At first, elevator operators tried to preserve the narrative authority of the store by summarizing each story as it hissed by unseen: "ready-to-wear, toys, household goods." But such efforts, however well-intentioned, could no more convey the meaning of the metropolitan text than Cliffs Notes can take the place of reading *War and Peace*. The time you save is just what makes the difference between trivia and culture.

What the elevator operators could not do was demand that passengers pay attention, or that they move through the store in the proper sequence. People might get off wherever they wanted, skipping whole floors, or else visiting them in whatever eccentric and unprepared manner they pleased. As a result, shopping became a "writerly" operation long before reading did, with everybody lapsing, at least potentially, into a polysemous individuality.

The escalator would eventually restore the narrative discipline of the department store,

moving people along in a timely and specifically plotted way. But not before the elevator had shaped the experience of a whole generation or more, transforming the commercial metropolis—technologically—into a collection of suburbs, each accessible independently by private car. And, more importantly, elevators transformed the classic community of shoppers into a jumble of anonymous "modern" individuals.

This difference remains obvious, even today. People on escalators behave sociably: they talk, point, laugh, hold hands, look at each other and their environment. In elevators, there is no environment, either spatial or temporal; everything, sociability included, is suspended, just like the opaque box in which the riders are jammed. There is no talking or laughing, because everybody is alone, even if in company. So, people find a blank spot, either up or down, to stare at until the suspended interval is over. Unless there is a fire, in which case those little heat-sensitive buttons, which have replaced the spurned human operators, send the whole carload of victims, vengefully, right into the smoke and flames.

[Essay]

## AFTER OIL

From *Oil Notes*, by Rick Bass. An account of his experiences as a petroleum geologist will be published in July by Houghton Mifflin. A longer version of this essay appeared in the *Southwest Review*. *The Watch*, a collection of Bass's stories, was published by Norton. Bass lives in Yaak, Montana.

**I**t's all underground, and it's all very expensive, and you are reconstructing history from hundreds of millions of years ago with eight-inch circles in the ground, essentially sending blind men into an ancient, lost country, and trying to chart hundreds and hundreds of miles of buried forests and rivers and seas and dunes with these tiny pin-sticks, like flagsticks on a golf course. No; better, like trying to determine the state of Colorado based only on what you can see for eight inches from, say, any fireplug in the state.

But you do not think of shaking your confidence in the present-day Mississippi River of Mexico. These books are too much. Certainly not the rules, though not much at all.

Don't think of it.

You can always find a reason not to do something, or to be skeptical, or frightened.

There is no talent involved in not doing. You have to try to avoid dry holes, but to be frightened of them, frightened into inactivity and negativeness, means you have been defeated.

**T**his is how a landowner gets paid on an oil well.

Before taxes, oil is worth, say, \$28 per barrel. You have a well on your land, say, a forty-acre ranch. But the well might have been drilled as an eighty-acre unit. This means there's another forty acres of the unit that you don't control: your neighbor, in whatever direction the unit happens to lie, is your partner in hope. The well is drilled and completed, flowing 100 barrels of oil per day. So. You have what is called half-interest in the unit. Multiply this half by \$28 per barrel by 100 barrels per day and that well will earn \$1,400 per day.

Now you are royalty.

This is where your past returns.

The oil company drilled that well. It hired a big staff, maybe had some of those people on the payroll for twenty or thirty years. Every day, in and out, lots of days. Lots of overhead, too. Big things, like compressors and rig rentals (ever try to rent a machine that will drill a hole a mile deep into rock?) and blowout insurance and bulldozers and copy machines; little things, like coffee for the coffee machine. And let's just say for a round figure that it cost half a million dollars to buy the leases to the mineral rights and drill and complete that well. Completing a well is like marrying someone, I would think; there are a thousand little fragile procedural technical engineering things you must do, all kinds of equilibriums and balancings and chemical stimulations, and they're all very, very expensive. Plus, you've got to buy a nice ring: 3,000—or 5,000 or 15,000 or however deep your zone is—feet of heavy steel pipe.

So those dollars have been spent. Knowing that if by some dinosauric quirk of temper there happened not to be oil beneath that eight-inch-diameter hole in the ground, and maybe not even any of the sand they're looking for—maybe the old river channel went left around that Jurassic tree, instead of right—then that's a dead solid five hundred thou that is gone—swoosh, the earth sucks it up, a little bit of science and absolutely no oil, nil gas.

But sometimes things work out. Sometimes a well will go for twenty years, once completed. Sometimes a landowner will throw a barbecue for the geologists, in his pleasure. Those are fun. There will be a pig roasting. And an ice chest

of beer. And corn. Maybe he'll let you go hunting with him on his land. It's sort of like marrying his daughter, finding oil on his land.

**G**as is neat, too. You can't see the gas, can't climb up to the top of the tank battery and peer down into it, peer at its hot black sticky sweetness, but it smells good, and is more impressive to me than even the oil, in its own strong way.

It hisses.

It really does scare me still, makes me much more conscious of the power of the earth and its history and even beyond that, physics and the universe—it gives the earth more character, makes it three-dimensional, when that well-head is opened up and the high-pressured gas whooshes out of the pipe and into the air. Gas from the earth's insides herself: pure energy (you caught it!), raw force, the real thing. Believe me, the real thing. It is not Hollywood making that dry roaring; it is something that is real and that you might not have dreamed was down there.

It's not like anything you've ever heard. I could say like a jet, like a comet, but it's not like anything else. You just need to go out to the field and get someone to open one up for a couple of seconds. On an average well—one that makes, say, a million cubic feet of gas per day—a five- or six-second demonstration of the earth's power and angry internal rumblings, an angry desire to escape, will cost about seventeen cents. Yes, gas is cheap.

One day, you'll try to drill a dry hole on purpose, a shallow little well for the disposal of saltwater that's being produced along with the oil in another well, and you'll accidentally punch through some mystery sand that's got maybe a couple of years' worth of gas in it. You'll do the wrong thing and it'll be the right move, maybe you'll be downthrown on a fault when you're trying to be upthrown, and still you'll make a well, and all you are supposed to do when this happens—this is your obligation, in fact—is to just squint your eyes into the sun and nod slowly like some fat guru and don't tell anyone you didn't know what you were up to, just squint at that sun and consciously breathe in every stolen second of it, because the other ninety-nine times the other kind of luck is going to pick up a stick and knock you into the next county. You got lucky this time, but another time the unexpectedly unfortunate will happen to you far beyond logic or reason, and if pressed for a reason, all I can guess is that it is some negative energy or power of the earth that playfully slaps at the lives of men for even daring to try and touch her. All in good ironic humor, of course.



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As if a dry hole or any small or large amount of dollar bills mattered to the earth and to the ice caps on mountains and to the forests growing on the north sides of mountain ranges.

**C**ore point is this: dramatic and precise.

Usually as you drill down through the formations, your bit grinds them up into little flake-size pieces. You can sniff these chips for the odor of oil or gas, put them under microscopes and ultraviolet lights and make fairly accurate extrapolations as to what the rest of the formation might be like.

But when you really need the most absolute

story on a formation, top to bottom, with minimal disturbance, you cut a core through it rather than drilling it up. It is enjoyable if you do not let it make you nervous. It's certainly a good and valuable thing to be adept at.

Coring is expensive and slow, which is why you don't always do it. Rather than having a bit on the end of the drill string, you have a long (thirty- or sixty-foot) core barrel, laced at the end with sharp diamonds around the edge. It's hollow, like a sleeve. It acts like a cookie cutter, except in this case the dough is rock and can be sixty feet thick. (If it's thicker, you cut two cores or three; whatever it takes.) The drillers cut through the formation, encircling it with the barrel, intact, sampling a long narrow plug ("core"), and then, slowly, they pull the drill pipe back out, stand by stand, until they get to the core barrel. Then they bring the barrel up and knock the core out by banging on the sides with hammers—it slides out like a skinny pole, wet and steaming, broken in places, but they piece it back together—and wrap it quickly in foil to keep all the oils and gases and fluids from escaping, evaporating, trying to rush out into that good light atmospheric pressure.

Then the core is cut into segments and placed in numbered cardboard boxes which are rushed down the steps and into the back of a waiting pickup truck, engine idling, which races off into the night, back to the laboratory three, four, five hours away, no stopping. There, it is analyzed immediately, no matter the hour.

Picking the point where you tell the driller to stop drilling, come out with the bit, fasten the core barrel on instead, and go back in with it—that in itself a tremendous expense of time and money—that's the magic. Drilling, drilling, drilling, watching, and then knowing, or thinking you know, that you are right on top of the formation you're interested in: a foot above it, or less. Son, you had better be right.

And you've usually got a lot of time to second-guess. You've been looking at drill rates and at the samples, but these characteristics change from well to well, even in the same area, and there can be faults, and the formations will be thicker in some areas and thinner in others, and all this while they're coming out with the steady, fast, reliable drill bit, and preparing to screw on that slow old diamond-studded *expensive* core barrel (it's good for only one cutting—it will be ruined whether you were right or not—\$10,000 for that, plus another \$10,000 in rig time). That's when you're standing there with your clipboard and notes and maybe a cup of coffee, and nothing else, and all the rough-necks know the pressure's on you, and they don't let up. They do everything in their capacity to make you second-guess yourself. They

[Memorandum]

## GREAT BOOKS AND GUMBEL

*From a confidential memorandum written last fall by Bryant Gumbel, co-anchor of the Today show, to Marty Ryan, the show's executive producer. The four-page memo evaluates each segment of the NBC morning show.*

**Books:** Let me preface this section by expressing my faith in Emily Boxer [who schedules author appearances for *Today*]. We have no one who works harder or is better connected or more effective than Emily. She gets *every* big book that comes out, and part of the price we pay for that is putting on some authors who aren't so great. My suggestions then are twofold. First, we should try to limit the number of duffards we put on—as much as possible without weakening those relationships Emily cultivates effectively. Second, in those cases where the author isn't a name, we should look for fresh approaches—maybe a videotape of them at work—video of their subject matter (if it's non-fiction)—[or clips from] controversial or critical reviews, etc. Whatever approach we take, I suggest we tread carefully. This is an area where we *roust* the competition and by so doing have gained a great reputation as a "smart folks" show among the learned people who populate the world of serious literature. Even in times when ratings are off—as they were and will ultimately be again—this reputation never wavers and is invaluable—let's not piss it away to get rid of the one or two boring authors we have a month.





Under Woman Skit, from *A Portrait of American Mothers and Daughters*, a volume of photographs by a Fastman, published by NewSage Press. This photograph appeared in "Mothers and Daughters," a show last winter at the New York State Museum, in Albany.

swear up-and-down, for those twelve hours, that you're wrong, that they've worked on every well that's been drilled within fifty miles of here and that none of the other geologists ever picked a core anywhere near where you have.

It's like being the field-goal kicker: they don't need you, they don't need you, they drill for days and days, but then one day they need to know when to stop drilling, and you have to come in and be exactly right, down to the last inch. And you do it, and ignore their second-guesses, and when it turns out you were right, you can't even look relieved.

There was never any question.

[Brochure]

## IN PRAISE OF LAWNS

From *Lawn and Sports Turf Benefits*, a brochure published by the Lawn Institute, in Pleasant Hill, Tennessee.

**W**hen a single grass plant is plucked for viewing, it's not very impressive. It isn't very strong. It isn't a plant to display in a bud vase. But it is very impressive when banded with five others in each square inch of lawn, resulting in a turf of over 850 plants per square foot, or about

8.5 million in each 10,000-square-foot lawn.

The grass family is extremely important to humankind. Turf is an amenity that touches a fundamental chord in the plant-humankind relationship. The following list of benefits provides an overview of the ways in which turf grass helps make our world a good place to live.

### AESTHETIC BENEFITS

A lawn makes up at least one third of the entire picture of a house. The first thing people see when approaching a property is the yard—it gives that all-important first impression and can convey hospitality and warmth. This is known in the real estate business as "curb appeal." The appearance of the lawn bespeaks the personal values of the resident. Lawns that are kept with precision indicate a gardener who is meticulous. Some feel that a person who keeps the lawn perfectly clipped is a person who can be counted on.

The natural green color of a lawn provides a cooling effect, giving a sense of coolness that makes the yard a more pleasant place. The lawn offers a soft surface to walk on; it offers tranquility and a sense of security provided by the timeless duration of its life, and a feeling of a good investment.

### ECONOMY

Turf grass is a \$25 billion industry in the United States; more than 100 million people are dependent on their living directly from the production of turf. These figures

#### HEALTH BENEFITS

Lawn tending provides the best in walking, bending, and lifting exercises, all of which promote good health. Also, the soft, resilient cushioning attributes of turf make other activities safer and more enjoyable. Plants affect people's moods. A lawn can create feelings of happiness, thoughtfulness, peace, serenity, privacy, or sadness, depending on our association with its uses—city park, golf course, home lawn, or memorial park. Where vegetation grows, child mortality, suicide, and energy consumption are lower than in places where there are no plants. For city people, watching grass grow and responding to the seasons may be a last link to the solace and understanding that our vanishing wilderness once provided.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

*Noise abatement:* In general, lawns reduce undesirable noise levels by 20–30 percent. Research on the acoustic properties of turf has shown that grass absorbs sound. In fact, a Merion bluegrass turf was rated superior to a heavy carpet or a felt pad in sound absorption.

*Temperature modification:* Plants play an important role in controlling climate. Grass surfaces reduce temperature extremes by absorbing the sun's heat during the day and releasing it slowly in the evening. Grasses reduce surface temperature by as much as fifty degrees and air temperature by as much as seven degrees. On a block with eight average houses, front lawns have the cooling effect of about seventy tons of air conditioning.

*Glare reduction:* Ours is a shiny world made of polished and highly reflective building materials, vehicles, paved surfaces, and signs. All this glare contributes to stress. Well-maintained turf provides a soft green surface which significantly reduces and absorbs glare.

*Air pollution:* Grass absorbs toxic pollutants from the air. And since plants add oxygen to the air, they dilute pollution. Grass also traps particulate matter found in the atmosphere.

*Oxygen generation:* A turf area of fifty feet by fifty feet produces enough oxygen to meet the needs of a family of four.

*Fire retardation:* Healthy green turf does not sustain fire the way dense woody vegetation does. A buffer of well-maintained lawn grass around buildings is good insurance.

In conclusion, grass plants are a unique gift of nature and give the world enormous benefits. In his classic eulogy to Kentucky bluegrass, Senator John J. Ingalls wrote a century ago: "Next in importance to the divine profusion of water, light and air, may be reckoned the universal beneficence of grass. Grass is the forgiveness of nature—her constant benediction."

[Article]

## CASTRO'S CURVEBALL

From the column "Great Moments," by J. David Truby, in the March issue of *Sports History*, a bi-monthly magazine published by Empire Press, in Leesburg, Virginia.

If Fidel Castro had been pitching his wicked curveball to major league batters instead of pitching the economic curve of communism in Cuba, there is little doubt that world history would be somewhat different today. Several big league teams actively scouted the Cuban premier as a hot pitching prospect back in the late 1940s.

Horace C. Stoneham, the eighty-five-year-old former president of the New York Giants, said that his team was looking at Castro. "We had our top people evaluate him, as did several other teams. Castro was a real prospect."

The young man was an undergraduate at the University of Havana, studying pre-law, and a star pitcher for the school's baseball team. Nobody considered him to be a guerrilla fighter, a communist, or even a potential Third World political figure. He was a clean-shaven young man, a bright student interested in a law career.

Howie Haak, who until recently worked Latin America for the Pittsburgh Pirates, is perhaps the greatest big league talent scout of all time. Now in his mid-seventies, Haak recalled Castro as "a big kid who threw a wicked *bleeping* curveball—nothing amateur about his pitches. He was a good prospect because he could throw and think at the same time, a rare talent in a young pitcher."

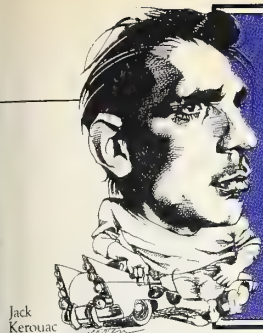
Haak added: "Castro had great control of that curve too. And he could muscle up on a pitch. He could set 'em up with the curve, blow 'em down with the heater. Or do it the other way. He was a damn fine pitcher."

The late Alex Pompez, who scouted the Caribbean for the Giants, first saw Castro pitch in Havana in 1948. His scouting report to Stoneham noted: "He... throws a good ball... not always hard, but smart. He has good control and should be considered seriously."

The Washington Senators sent Joe Cambria, their top Latin scout, who also wrote an impressive report: "Fidel Castro is a big, powerful young man. His fastball is not great, but passable. He uses good curve variety. He uses his head and can win that way for us, too."

A Giants' scouting report noted, "He is a polite, well-spoken young man... a gentleman





Jack Kerouac

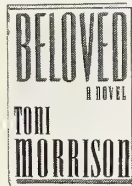
# 3 BOOKS, 3 BUCKS. NO COMMITMENT. NO KIDDING.



Mark Twain



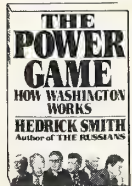
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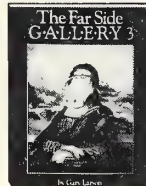
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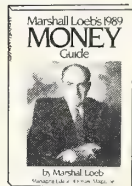
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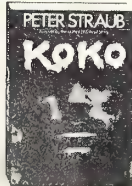
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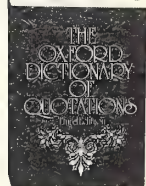
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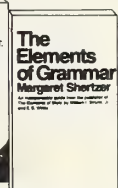
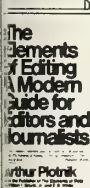
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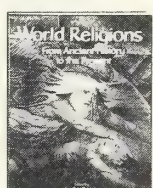
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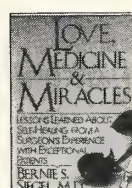
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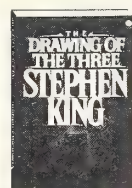
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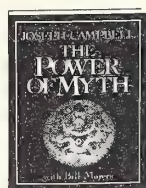
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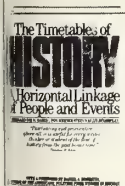
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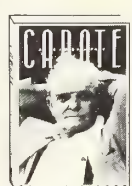
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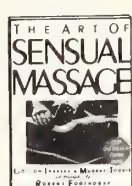
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... more serious than many other local players. He is a nice young man to deal with... stable."

Eventually, Pompez got the authorization from the Giants' front office to offer Castro a contract. It was a good offer by contemporary standards, with a \$5,000 bonus for signing.

After several days of deliberation with friends, family, and some of his professors, Castro turned down the offer to play professional baseball. The Giants' officials were stunned.

"We couldn't believe he turned us down," recalled Pompez. "Nobody from Latin America had said no before. We had kids climbing all over us to play pro ball in the States. Castro said no, but in his very polite way. He was really a very nice kid."

Castro explained, in a formal letter to the Gi-

ants, that he wanted to finish his law studies and that he liked being an amateur player.

According to Stoneham, "Castro never mentioned politics at any time in his letter. He didn't indicate anything revolutionary to us. Alex always remembered him as a friendly and polite young man who thought seriously about our offer, and who turned us down with dignity. Despite what happened later, at that time he was a real fine young gentleman."

[Oral History]

## SCULPTING A LOUISVILLE SLUGGER

*From Baseball Lives, a collection of interviews conducted by Mike Bryan, published by Pantheon. This interview is with Ronald Bryant, a supervisor at the Louisville Slugger bat factory.*

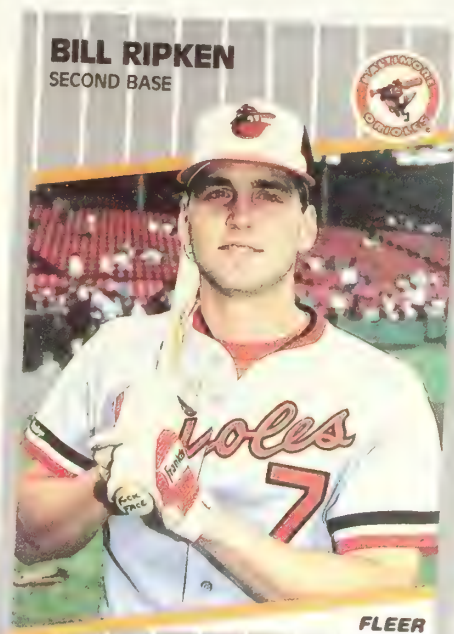
I started off as a flame burner—that's a hand operation, a complete different system than they got out here now. Now I supervise plus help do the work. Consequently I'm running the tracer lathe, the automatic lathe, picking out timber, checking weights, checking models, checking orders. Gets to be quite a job.

If the bats aren't good, I'm the one who hears about it. We just got a bad bat back from Dave Concepcion. We can't figure out what happened. We checked the master model and it was a little off but not that much off. We allow one-tenth of an inch for sanding. After they're turned on the lathe they get rough sanded, then fine sanded. But if there happens to be new sandpaper in there, it cuts a little more. Maybe someone didn't allow for the sanding. Plus, they had just put new sandpaper in there. It changed that whole bat. A thirty-second of an inch. Enough that you could see it. Concepcion could tell by feeling it. These guys can pick 'em up and, I guarantee, come within half an ounce of what it weighs. Concepcion's been using our bats for nineteen years, and that type of person we don't like to give a wrong bat.

The players know you can't always find exactly what they want, but you've got to give them the best. Particular ballplayers like knots in the barrels, some like wide grain, some like narrow. Most of 'em like the wide grain. They think it's harder. It's in their head. There's no science to it. I've always been told, actually, your narrow grain is your stronger bat because the narrow grain has took its time by nature and grown slow, while the wide grain has been shot with juice to make it grow fast.

[Baseball Card]

### A FOUL OFF THE HANDLE



This card, produced by the Fleer trading-card company in Philadelphia, was removed from the market in January when Fleer discovered the obscenity on the base of the bat. Fleer refuses to comment on the number of cards in circulation, but dealers speculate it may be anywhere from 20,000 to 200,000. The card, whose worth was initially appraised at between two and five cents, has sold for as much as \$125 since the recall. Ripken claims he was the victim of a prank by one of his teammates.



Ted Williams, as great a player as he was, wanted narrow grain. He didn't want the wide grain. He said that tree grew too fast.

Harmon Killebrew used to keep calling me saying, "I want narrow grain, narrow grain." He got this from Ted Williams. I kept sending him narrow grain, so narrow you couldn't hardly see it.

"Too wide, too wide."

Right before he retired, Killebrew came down here and I asked him personally, "Harmon, show me what you're talking about, 'narrow grain.'" And he went over and picked out a bat that in my opinion was a cull—something we probably wouldn't give a minor leaguer. He wanted *no grain at all*, what we call brashie, no texture at all. I said, "For two years I dug craters trying to get narrow as I could and I could have walked up and picked any of them out of the rack for you."

With the knots, I think there is science. You ever saw a piece of wood and hit a knot? It's hard. I think the knots help in the barrel. The older ballplayers almost always asked for knots in the barrel; they don't do it as much today. A lot of the new ones coming up don't even know about it. Babe Ruth was one of the first who started asking for knots in the barrel. We've got a record of it. Carl Yastrzemski, he'd ask for knots. Ted Williams would. Willie Stargell would. It's on the order: "Knots in barrel if possible."

Hickory went out about when I came in. It has no grain at all, just fiber; that's why they put the dark finish on hickory, to cover it up. All the bats are ash now. It's got a grain to it and you can get a bigger bat with lighter weight—and nowadays these ballplayers they want lighter bats. They do not use heavy bats. I'd say your average weight now is between thirty and thirty-one ounces. Used to be thirty-three, thirty-four, thirty-five. We had some guys using forty-one-ounce bats. Back then a pitcher would come up after being in the minor leagues for years; he's in his thirties when he makes the big-league club, so he wasn't throwing that hundred-mile-an-hour fastball. Now you get these kids coming up, they're eighteen years old, throwin' that dude a hundred, a hundred and ten miles an hour. You're not going to get no forty-one-ounce bat around on *that*. You've got to get that bat *through* there fast, the way they pitch today.

For as many bats as we put out I think we do a super job. We don't get many back. Not satisfying the ballplayer—not getting it to him on time, not getting it right—that disturbs me more than anything. To me, that bat there is Dale Murphy. The bat is his personality. It's him. I think he's a super guy, and I try to give

him what he wants, give him the best. Of course I do that with all 'em. I don't do any favors. My favorite team's Boston, but they don't get any better bats than the Reds or the Yankees—which I hate, of course.

[Oral History]

## HAROLD AND LOUIE

*From Bird, Kansas, by Tony Parker, to be published in July by Knopf. Parker, a British journalist, asked the residents of a small Kansas town to talk about their lives. The names of those interviewed, as well as the name of the town, have been changed. Harold Albert and his wife, Louie, are the richest people in Bird.*

HAROLD: This here's Louie my wife. She ain't feeling too good today, she's got trouble with some bad teeth. She'll just set there and listen to us, but she doesn't feel up to talking much.

LOUIE: I'll say something if I want.

HAROLD: You bet.

LOUIE: If you say something wrong or I don't agree with.

HAROLD: Shouldn't be all that long before you start speaking then. But you just set there and give your teeth a chance, else they'll never get better. You should have had them fixed sooner like I said.

LOUIE: They weren't so bad sooner.

HAROLD: Okay, well you tell him about your teeth later, only right now I'm going to tell him about my early life, okay? Well, now, the first thing is I'm seventy-four years of age and she's a little bit older.

LOUIE: Only a little bit older.

HAROLD: Only a little bit, right. My mom and pa, they ran what was a grocer's store on the corner of Main and Lincoln. That's how we met, one day when she came by the store for some eggs.

LOUIE: Sugar. It was sugar I came by for, not eggs.

HAROLD: Okay, sugar, eggs, it's not important.

LOUIE: My mom sent me into the store for some sugar, and I took to going there to see him when I was on my way to school.

HAROLD: She didn't talk much these days either, she just used to stand there and I talked to her. She got me into trouble for talking and not getting on.

LOUIE: I never told him how much he talked, how much he teased me and made up tales about doing and done and seen, see if I believed him. It's hard

he used to laugh and tell me I must be pretty dumb if I'd believed him. To tell you the honest truth, I didn't really care for him at all.

HAROLD: If you didn't really care for me, how come you used to stop by so often then?

LOUIE: Only 'cause I'd got nothing else to do.

HAROLD: Well, you had nothing else to do for six years. That's how long it took me talking to her, to persuade her to marry me.

LOUIE: I never knew if he really meant it or not, that's why. I never knew if he really meant anything he said to me at all. Lordy, fifty-two years ago that was.

HAROLD: Fifty-two years ago that we was married, that's not bad for these days. I must have meant what I said then, when I said I wanted to be married with you.

LOUIE: You said lots of things you didn't mean though. Do you know one thing he said to me? I can remember it to this day, he said if I married him I'd never want for a new dress. And one day after we was married, I said to him I wanted a new dress and he'd told me I'd never want for one. You know what he said? He said he couldn't afford to buy no new dress for me, so I'd better stop wanting it, then I wouldn't be wanting for a dress.

HAROLD: Well that's how it was then. You could have a new dress now if you wanted one, but in those days things was hard.

LOUIE: The hardest times were after the recession in what they called the dust-bowl years: those were the hardest times, I reckon.

HAROLD: You know, that dust used to get so thick on the backs of the cows, when it rained it made it solid. And seeds were in it. I've seen cattle had thistles growing on their backs.

LOUIE: That's an old farmers' tale. I've heard him tell that story a hundred times or more. It ain't true.

HAROLD: It is too, I've seen it, I've seen it myself.

LOUIE: It used to be just you knew a man who'd seen it.

HAROLD: Well, still, those dust storms, they were really something all right.

LOUIE: They really were. But we survived. Hard work but we enjoyed it.

HAROLD: Every minute.

LOUIE: No, not every minute: I didn't enjoy it when you went away with the truck and left me on my own to mind the store.

HAROLD: Oh, it was a real classy vehicle that one was: a huge big thing, the biggest around here for miles. It was called a Diamond T. In all the years I had it, I can't once remember it ever broke down.

LOUIE: That was because you looked after it so good.

HAROLD: I did all the servicing of it myself. I like mechanical things, I always have. I learned it from watching other people right from when I was a kid. That way I picked up how to do it myself. Same with everything in the house: the plumbing, the electrics, the sewerage, everything that needed doing, I always did it myself. I still do. Out in the garage there I've got all the tools necessary to do everything could ever want doing. Whatever it is, I can fix it. It makes me happy that I'm like that.

LOUIE: And obstinate.

HAROLD: What's obstinate got to do with it?

LOUIE: Obstinate's got everything to do with it. Tell him about that air-conditioning plant we've got in the wall there.

HAROLD: What's there to tell about it? It only needs taking down and putting together again.

LOUIE: That air-conditioning there, it's getting on for fifty years old now. It was one of the first ones like that that they ever invented. When he put it in, it was just about as modern as you could get. Now it's broken-down, and there ain't a single person left living can fix it.

HAROLD: Except me.

LOUIE: Okay, except you. So why don't you fix it?

HAROLD: I'm going to, I keep telling you—or if I can't fix it, I'm going to put a whole new system in.

LOUIE: You're too old to put a whole new system in. Why not just call someone up and ask them to come along and put a new system in?

HAROLD: Pay some young feller thirty dollars an hour to do something I can do myself?

LOUIE: You see what I mean by obstinate? We could have a whole new house now if we wanted to, with a brand-new system in it.

HAROLD: Okay, go ahead, let's have a whole new house: only any time we talk about that, it's always you says you don't want to move, you want to stay here.

LOUIE: I don't want to move, why should I want to move, we're happy right here.

HAROLD: So then, okay, you'll have to wait until I get around to fixing the air-conditioning.

LOUIE: And how long's it going to be?

HAROLD: I don't know how long it's going to be. Let's talk now about when the oil came into our lives, huh?

LOUIE: When the oil came into our lives, that was when all the headaches came too. I sometimes think that.

HAROLD: Well, it was a strange strange time at the beginning I can tell you, it sure was. There'd been talk for years, you know, that there was oil under some of the land around



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From "The Cuyahoga Valley," a current exhibition of photographs by Robert Glenn Ketchum, at the Akron Art Museum.

these parts. We had some little piece of land we owned ourselves out that way, and they said they'd do a test drill there. And that one, the one on our land, before we knew what was happening, it was making fifty barrels a day: every day, bang, bang, bang, just like that. Came the time we had a total of twenty-four wells on our land, and one of them alone was producing 400 barrels of oil a day. So that was it, there we were, we had a very big strike on our land. There's very few times anyone ever strikes as lucky as that.

LOUIE: Then letters started to come, cables, long-distance telephone calls, it was like suddenly everybody in the world knew about it and was begging us for our help. Some of the letters, they were ten pages long: people sent us letters from their doctors telling us their whole medical histories. Or they'd get their kids to write: "My daddy just died, and my mommy said you'd got a big lot of money and you sounded to be good kind people, please will you send her some money to help her."

HAROLD: One time we had a cable, all it said was "Desperate for money, please send all you can spare," nothing else but that and a name and address. I mean, how do folk think someone's going to respond to something like that?

LOUIE: Sad thing was, you know, we reckoned some of the stories people told us was true. But it was just like one of them avalanches, they kept on and on coming, and how could you tell? You'd need your whole life to sort out which was which. It got so bad, we just used to set us down here and look at all the letters we'd divided up into piles: those we thought were really sad and had big troubles, those who had a little bit less, and those who sounded like folk who just thought they'd like money for some scheme or other they'd got. And every one of the piles, they all got bigger and bigger and we felt we were getting sick worrying about how to decide. So then one day someone said to us we couldn't go on like that, there was no way we could ever decide who to help and who not to. What we should do was think of something else to do with our money, throw all the letters in the boiler, and not even read no more that came. So that's just what we did.

HAROLD: We set ourselves down, and we talked about this and that, and in the end we decided what we'd do should be to the benefit of everyone around here, not just a few folks, but everyone.

LOUIE: I'd been to that old library of ours most weeks to get me a couple of books to read,



'cause I like to read. And as I was walking home one day, down along South Adams here, I got to thinking. So when I came in that door I says to him, "Harold," I said, "I've thought of an idea for something to do with our money. I'm getting real tired of climbing up those library steps every time I go there—it it bothers my knees, my arthritis is getting real bad now. So why don't we give the town a proper decent library where folk can walk right on in and choose a book for themselves without having to climb all them steps?"

HAROLD: So I says to her, "I think that's a real neat idea."

LOUIE: You'll have folks tell you here and there how it was their idea for to have a library. But it wasn't their idea, not in the first place: it was mine, because of my knees.

HAROLD: So there she sets: and we like looking at it, and folks all say they like to look at it and they like going there.

LOUIE: You going to tell him about the letter?

HAROLD: You mean the letter this week from those people out East?

LOUIE: We had a letter this week from some people in New York, what was it, the American Libraries Association or something?

HAROLD: Something like that.

LOUIE: They want to make us a presentation.

HAROLD: It's no big deal.

LOUIE: They want to make us a presentation because we built the library. He won't go.

HAROLD: Sure I won't go. New York, do you know how far that is? I looked it up in my atlas, and New York, that's somewhere close on 1,500 miles away, that's just as the crow flies. How many days would that take on a train to get to New York?

LOUIE: Like I said, we don't have to go on a train, we could go on an airplane.

HAROLD: You can go on an airplane if you like, but I'm not going to. It's okay for some folk, they say they're fine and dandy. But I'm never going to get me inside of one of them things, no sir, that's for sure. If they want to make a presentation to us they can come here and do it here, or they can mail it to us, I don't mind which.

LOUIE: Obstinate, see, like I told you. Well I guess we'll never get to New York for no presentation, that's for sure.

HAROLD: We could go on the train.

LOUIE: How could we go on the train?

HAROLD: We could go to Kansas City, Missoura, and we could go on the train from there.

LOUIE: Look, just a minute ago you were saying it was too far and it'd take too long. And anyway you don't like the trains they've got nowadays.

HAROLD: They might have some of the old sort.

We could inquire. If they had one of the old sort, it'd be real good to go on a train like that all the way from Kansas City, Missoura, to New York.

LOUIE: They wouldn't let you drive it.

HAROLD: They might too.

LOUIE: They wouldn't let you drive it. And anyway they don't have that sort. Do you know what he's talking about? He's talking about them old steam trains they used to have, the ones with a big chimney on the front shaped like that, and a cow-catching gate, and an old steam whistle that you pulled the chain and it went "Woo woo."

HAROLD: "Woo woo woo," that's how they went: they went "Woo woo woo." You know, when I was a boy they used to go across the plains, I could see them in the distance from the farm that we had, you'd see them going across the skyline. That was the Union Pacific Line, the Union, Topeka, and the Santa Fe.

LOUIE: It wasn't nothing of the kind, you're getting it all mixed up with the words of that song. And anyhow, you couldn't see that railroad from there, it was a hundred miles away.

HAROLD: I could too. Anyhow, I could see a railroad and I could hear those whistles. And the smoke from their chimney going up in the sky, it was a beautiful sight, they sure don't have trains as beautiful as that these days. Sometimes I reckon, you know, if I'd been a young man when we had all this money come to us, maybe only half the age I am now, thirty-five or forty or somewhere around there, you know what I reckon I might have done? I might have gone off and bought me one of them trains, and driven it all day to my heart's content. I'd have said to Louie here, I'd have said, "Louie I'm going off for a while, I'm going to get me a train and drive it across the prairie some."

LOUIE: I shouldn't believe all that if I were you. He just makes things up as they come into his head.

HAROLD: I didn't make that up about that train and its whistle, I've always wanted one of those.

LOUIE: I know you have. But you'd be driving off and driving it across the prairie, you'd just talk. You'd have wanted to get on with you and sit in the engine, the engine and cook your dinner, and what you'd be doing, and driving it across the prairie, that'd have been it as you go, but you'd have come hollering for me.

HAROLD: Well. Well.

I wouldn't

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# OUR FRAIL PLANET IN COLD, CLEAR VIEW

The South Pole as global laboratory

By Barry Lopez

Was it evening in Antarctica? Nothing about the sky would have told you so. No twilight lingered, no star rose. Local time, I believe, was a little after seven in the morning, Buenos Aires time; we were keeping New Zealand time—a little after ten at night. However one might decide it

(we took for our time the time of the people who waited to hear from us each day by radio), the crush of meridians at this spot, the absence of any event even approaching a sunset, made the issue of determining the hour only a vaguely foreboding curiosity.

It was thirty below zero. I stood face to the sun, my eyes shut. A light wind burned my cheeks but it did not disturb my vespers. We were by now, the four of us, used to the chill, and these moments of surcrease with the sun at day's end I had come to look forward to.

We were camped deep in the Antarctic interior, at an altitude of 9,300 feet on the polar plateau, our view unimpeded, pelagic, uninhabited. The waist of the sky was a pale lapis; the sun circled in it at an unvarying elevation, nineteen degrees above the horizon. High over the shoulders of the sky, the last thin wisps of mare's tail cirrostratus hung in disarray. Below the sun, a dense cloud the shape of a hornet's nest glowed spectrally, the white of the moon.

In those silent moments before turning to



bed I would stare at the snow's wind-riven crust and careened slabs and know, lifting my eyes to the horizon, I was as much at a loss for scale here as for time. No dark stone, none but the faintest shifts of color, no gradation of form, separated the damask plain from itself. I could imagine the

location precisely—89°42' S, some 2,400 miles south of Cape Horn, 3,900 miles south of Cape Town and Sydney—but I could not imagine it as a place. I felt as if I had fallen overboard in the night.

Our immediate and daily struggle was with the cold and a wind that drove the temperature even deeper. (In winter, it is sometimes colder here than it is on the surface of Mars: -120 degrees Fahrenheit. Our temperatures, those of the austral summer, were by comparison mild: -28, -31, -30 degrees.) But in the evening, under the pouring rays of the sun, another dark undercurrent would emerge. It was not cold enough to penetrate wear, and the day nor ever to disrupt completely the regenerating effect of the light, but it was clearly what troubled me. A spectral glow beneath the sun, a flaring out like the wail of a hornet. Staring at it through the air, you could easily see that yond was not mere reaches of sky, but was empty, met snow.

Barry Lopez, a contributing editor of *Harper's Magazine*, is the author of *Arctic Dreams* and, most recently, *Crossing Open Ground*, a collection of essays.

Antarctica is  
the continent  
from which the  
Whole Earth  
vision implied  
in the famous  
Apollo 8  
photograph is  
taking shape

bling under the pressure of the light, was so vivid it seemed the edge of creation. It was as if by some accident of pure light and geography you could see an aspect of the divine—a single, stunning face, a sidelong glance, an instant.

I could have turned away from it with indefinite feelings of gratitude and reassurance, were it not for the disillusionment of a contradiction: nothing biological stirs here. It is not apparent from that loom of light and matter, deep and incandescent on the horizon, that creation has anything to do with biological life.

We had unconsciously assumed, with the good weather, that the land around us was tolerant. But the land, nightless, disinterested, was a caution. The Tree of Life did not grow here.

**A**ntarctica has surfaced in recent months like *glasnost*—the tip of a reorganizing principle with international implications. Scientists are coming here to gauge the impact of human activity on the fate of the earth—the depleting of the ozone layer, for example, or the warming of the atmosphere known as the greenhouse effect—and, at the same time, to probe deep into galactic space looking for errant light from the Big Bang. It is the continent from which the Whole Earth vision implied in the famous Apollo 8 photograph is taking shape, though the work still consists at present of relatively small-scale experiments and research programs.

Our fieldwork on the polar plateau was simple—scientific, straightforward, physical. Several hundred feet upwind of our camp we dug a snow pit, about twenty feet deep, seven feet long, and four feet wide, with a series of landings coming up staircase fashion on one of the long sides. Opposite those landings (up which we had boosted snow from the hole as our work progressed) was a twenty-by-seven-foot wall from which we were taking, with meticulous care, a vertical series of more than 1,300 snow samples for chemical analysis.

Snow and ice chemistry, a very recent branching of earth and atmospheric science, has an unprecedented potential to clarify complex environmental issues. Falling snow preserves, in a relatively undisturbed state and apparently with great fidelity, a record of the chemical composition of the atmosphere through which it descends. From snow pits, and from ice cores pulled from deep within glaciers and ice caps, scientists can piece together a chemical history of the earth's atmosphere—a record of climatic and environmental change.

Ice cores—the American effort to retrieve and analyze them is being led by the Glacier Research Group at the University of New Hampshire, with which I'd journeyed to the polar

plateau—preserve a diverse and esoteric historical record. The ice itself retains particles of wind-blown pollen and fallout from thermonuclear tests. And chemical analysis of the ice produces information about changes in global temperature, precipitation, and atmospheric turbidity; changes in the chemistry of the atmosphere (increases and decreases, for example, in carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulfuric and nitric acid, lead, chlorine, beryllium, and sodium); global volcanic events; and the varying extent of sea and land ice. The record goes back thus for 160,000 years (a Soviet ice core, from Vostok Station on the polar plateau) and is precise in some instances down to the level of pinpointing seasons in a particular year.

As techniques of analysis are refined and become more sophisticated, ice-core data become increasingly more reliable and useful. (As with any analytic science, there is debate about the validity of certain techniques and over the interpretation of findings.) Among those most keenly interested in the development of this information are people apprehensive about the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere and puzzled by the cause and consequence of ozone depletion. (Although there is argument about precisely what is happening, and which data are accurate, the scientific consensus is that human activity has had a profound and perhaps deleterious effect on the chemical structure of the atmosphere.)

The specific hope behind our work on the plateau was that it would improve an understanding of ozone depletion. Paul Mayewski, forty-two, the field party leader and director of the Glacier Research Group—he also directs the most ambitious U.S. ice-core program at a 3,000-meter drilling project in central Greenland—had noticed something peculiar in an ice core taken from Antarctica's Dominion Range in 1984. The upper layers contained relatively high levels of nitrate and chloride ions. Something about the pattern of their fluctuation was familiar... it seemed to match, at least superficially, the fluctuation pattern of ozone in Antarctica. Could it be, he wondered, that a proxy record for stratospheric ozone depletion was preserved in the snow?

If the correlation proved to be more than a coincidence, if the match was perfect, scientists would suddenly have an ozone record going back centuries. They could determine when the recent episode of ozone fluctuation began and, equally important, whether similar episodes have occurred in the past. If they have, the current cause of stratospheric ozone depletion might not be considered the result of human activity alone. (The prevailing scientific opinion is that



is—that holes in the ozone layer are caused primarily by chemical changes triggered by chlorofluorocarbons [CFCs], a manufactured product widely used as refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning agents. The Montreal Protocol, signed in 1987 and now ratified by sixty-six nations, calls for a 50 percent reduction of CFCs by 1999. Privately, Mayewski fears that his work could undermine the scientific basis for this resolve, a swift and unprecedented international reaction to a global environmental problem that he supports.)

The answer to the question of a reliable proxy record, or the beginning of an answer, lay with the collection of snow samples at our pit. The Dominion-core data matched well with the ozone record at the South Pole, but the Dominion Range itself is 250 miles north of the pole, on the 170° E meridian. Since the longest continuous ozone record for the Antarctic interior is of measurements taken at the pole itself, the obvious solution was to extract a chemical record from a nearby pit and match it to that ozone record. Mayewski chose a site about twenty miles upwind of South Pole Station for the pit, to guard against any trace of contamination—carbon monoxide from the diesel generators at South Pole Station or exhaust gases from aircraft. We rode in a tracked personnel-carrier,

logging the route as we went so we could be found, or in case we had to walk back. Once we made contact with Pole Station on our VHF radio, we bid adieu to the two men who had driven us out. A Canadian named Cameron Wake, a young graduate student of Mayewski's at the University of New Hampshire, and a biogeochemist named Mike Morrison, also from New Hampshire, occupied one tent, designated for cooking. I shared the other yellow, pyramid-shaped Scott tent with Mayewski and our radio. By the time we dug a latrine, secured our gear against high winds, and ate dinner, it was time to turn in.

Work the next day was arduous. We had to contend with cold temperatures and winds gusting to twenty knots. The altitude also affected us. (Because of the thinness of the atmosphere at the poles, the effective pressure altitude where we were working was about 11,000 feet.) But it was also enjoyable. The four of us worked closely together, a rhythmic pattern of sawing snow blocks, of digging and heaving snow with shovels and grain shovels in the morning; and a regimen of scientific sampling in the afternoon,

wearing sterile masks and gloves and white, particle-free jumpsuits and hoods over our clothing. (Our 1,300 samples, packed carefully in heavy plastic cases, would eventually be moved by plane to the Antarctic coast, by ship to Port Hueneme, California, then by refrigerated truck to the University of New Hampshire, where, sometime in the spring of 1990, the results would be known.) Our conversation was laconic and droll. We marveled during the day at nacreous solar coronas in the clouds overhead and at brilliant sun dogs, the radiant physics of light.

*We had a constant, vaguely deracinated feeling in being there, as out of place as polar bears in Jamaica*



I could not remember a camp as congenial or as comfortable as this. We were near the limits of exposure for a field-party, but we were well-outfitted, experienced people. We took pleasure in each other's company and were happy with the efficiency and progress of the work. But our sense of felicity was sharpened by something else, by the degree of our isolation. To have satisfying work to carry out, clear tasks that, however humble, seemed useful in the world, and to also be free of any sort of interruption on that vast white stage had a salubrious effect on us all. This contentment countered the constant, vaguely deracinated feeling we had in being there, as out of place as polar bears in Jamaica.

**B**efore heading out to make camp on the polar plateau, we had spent two days at the altitude at the South Pole, and I had the chance to tour the station and see some of the experiments being conducted. The Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station is a 100-foot-wide, 55-foot-tall, gold-painted aluminum dome with assorted outbuildings.

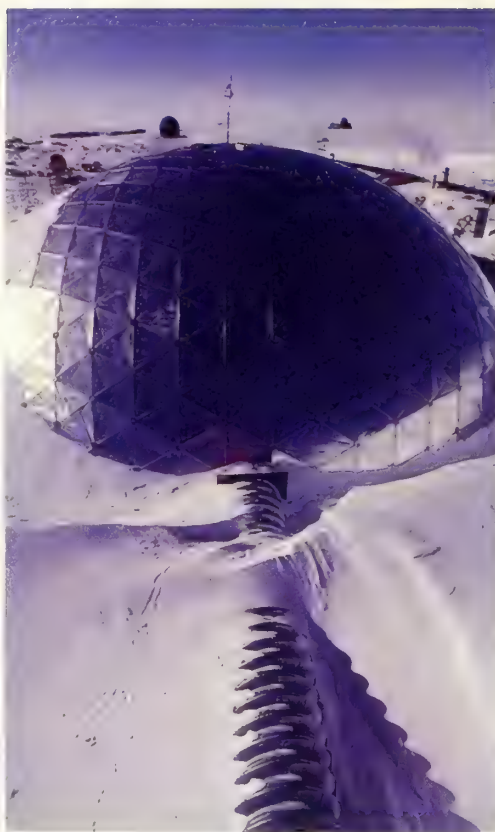
Built in 1975,  
Amundsen-  
Scott South  
Pole Station  
is a fifty-  
five-foot-tall  
geodesic dome  
half-buried  
now in drifting  
snow

num dome shelters a walk-in refrigerator and three 2-story prefabricated buildings in which the station's permanent staff live and work. Heat comes from hot glycol circulating in pipes; there are flush toilets, showers, and a small sauna. Built in 1975 and half-buried now in drifting snow, the dome is connected by a ninety-foot steel archway to a snow ramp leading directly to a taxiway and the base's 14,000-foot airstrip. At right angles to the dome's entry arch, and running roughly parallel to the runway, are two 400-foot steel archways. The one to the left as you enter houses a biomedical facility and, beyond that, rubber bladders that hold 225,000 gallons of diesel fuel. In the archway to the right are the station's power-generating plant, a small gymnasium, a carpentry shop, and a garage complex. A four-story "skylab," cramped as a submarine but withal the quietest and sunniest rooms on the base, is attached to one side of the dome by an arched steel passageway. On the opposite side of the dome is a tall, gantrylike structure where weather balloons are launched.

Upwind of the dome, in an area called the science quadrant, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration runs a Clean Air Facility—a building the size of a two-car garage on pilings, one of four it maintains in the Western Hemisphere to monitor atmospheric chemistry. Wooden shafts nearby descend to seismic pits that house the station's seismometers. Among various other scientific apparatus here is a splayed arrangement of elevated wooden boxes, receivers for a gamma-ray telescope that look like rabbit hutches.

Off another quarter of the dome, several hundred yards out, is a bunker for snow for fresh water. Downwind is a construction yard and storage area and a series of semipermanent, wood-and-canvas Quonset huts called Jamesways, which provide housing and work space for up to sixty people during the summer.

The geographic south pole, marked by a metal rod with a copper cap a few inches above the



snow, is situated about 200 yards from the dome entrance, in a field that the taxiway loop forms with the runway. The polar ice cap is advancing about thirty-three feet annually (the station is "upstream," on about 9,300 feet of ice), so each year, in January, the U.S. Geological Survey relocates the stake. A ceremonial monument, a shirt barber pole capped with a polished chrome sphere, stands about 150 feet closer to the station, in front of a semicircle of twelve flags, those of the original signatories to the Antarctic Treaty. During the austral summer, National Science Foundation LC-130 cargo planes land regularly at the pole, weather per-

mitting. The young U.S. Navy flight crews shut out to take each other's pictures at the ceremonial pole, then bolt for the tiny commissary in the dome where they buy souvenir T-shirts and arm patches. The planes—which deliver the T-shirts, among other things—never shut off their engines; as soon as they're unloaded they depart. The commissary does about \$60,000 a year in souvenir business.

Adjacent to the ceremonial pole is a confounding array of hand-painted, wooden signposts, commemorating the field seasons of scientists from Idaho to New Jersey. A picket ladder of wooden arrows on a high post lists the distances to seventeen New Zealand cities. Another post holds a county bus-stop sign. A solar-heated box with glass walls, up on stilts, contains a thermometer that registers 120 degrees. Among other oddities are a street sign from West Throop Street, Calumet Park, Illinois, and two pink flamingos.

About a mile downwind of Pole Station is a cluster of three Jamesways designed to accommodate several cosmic microwave background-radiation projects, one of which flies the black-and-orange flag of Princeton University. A few miles away, out on the 90° E meridian and clearly visible on the flattened polar terrain, is a small solar research facility, built on skids.

During the austral summer, which begins in



e November, as many as eighty people may be working at the pole at any one time. In mid-February, with the onset of winter, the population drops to eighteen or twenty and the temperature plummets. For eight months the station is cut off from the outside world except for daily radio communications and one airdrop of symbolic summer picnic food (e.g., watermelons), high-priority cargo, and mail in mid-November.

In these prosaic and unpretentious circumstances, a small scientific program in upper atmospheric physics, meteorology, astrophysics, geophysics, and atmospheric chemistry operates year-round. Few locations in the world are so well suited to such work. Cosmic-ray activity is studied on the earth's poles, and sun-earth interactions—the auroral display, for example—are focused here as well. Pole Station itself is situated in an ideal place for stellar and solar observation, on the highest, driest, coldest desert plateau in the world (snowfall at the pole is nil). There is less "sky noise" and water vapor in the air above the South Pole than anywhere else, and, because Pole Station is located at the end of the earth's rotational axis, it is possible to study the sun and various parts of the sky continuously, for months on end. Finally, Antarctica is seismically the quietest of the continents. One scientist put it this way: "We can, in effect, turn up the volume here and listen to seismic events that other stations, in Asia and North America, can't separate from background noise."

The instruments and programs at the pole probe the remotest parts of the universe, look for relic light from the creation; monitor cosmic activity in the interior of the sun; listen for the deepest, most nearly inaudible murmurs of the planet; and track satellites in polar orbit. The pole weren't so hard to reach for so much

of the year, its scientific program would be much larger.

**W**alking around Pole Station, a visitor is struck by the cosmic reach, the planetary perspective, of the inquiries here. The focus, in fact, of much of the research now conducted in Antarctica is global or planetary, rather than local. In an era of large, coordinated global geoscientific projects and space probes, and concern for global climate, the continent has come into its own. (We tend, I think, to imagine Antarctica as an island the size of perhaps Texas, sheathed in snow and ice and surrounded by a frozen ocean. It is nearly twice the size of Australia—the East Antarctic ice sheet alone is the size of the United States. Antarctica is the planet's heat sink; because of its size and its position at the end of the earth's axis—there is no com-

parable landmass in the Arctic—Antarctica drives both the circulation of the world's oceans and the circulation of the atmosphere.)

Greenhouse gases and ozone depletion have brought Antarctic research into high public profile and created, rather suddenly, a transnational perspective on human fate. (Greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide, by trapping heat in the earth's atmosphere, can trigger a dramatic shift in the pattern of global climate. The ozone layer protects biological organisms against ultraviolet radiation, which causes cancer in humans and would be lethal in its effect on certain plants and smaller creatures, especially in the upper layers of ocean water.) Interest in Antarctic research in these areas is apt to grow rapidly for one reason: adverse effects on global climate are likely to appear in Antarctica first, because of the central role the continent plays in the earth's weather and because of the pristine nature of its physical environment. Antarctica serves, then, as an early-warning station and, with the information in its ice cores, as a sort of archive for the atmosphere.

The accumulation of environmental and climatic records, and the rather recent realization of the pivotal role Antarctica plays in global research programs, are direct results of its having been dedicated to scientific research in 1956, in preparation for the International Geophysical Year. This arrangement was formalized in 1959 with the drafting of the Antarctic Treaty. (When the treaty was signed it set a precedent in disarmament negotiations, for mutual, on-site inspections, and for devising a legal framework for international management of the seafloor and space. Today no one need show a passport to visit the continent. Military maneuvers, weapons siting, and the disposal of nuclear waste are all prohibited. And the scientific work of any signatory nation is open to the inspection of any other signatory.)

Antarctica draws several hundred scientists each year from about twenty-five nations to pose questions about cosmology and climate, about the lives of penguins and seals and the behavior of ice, questions oddly eminent in this modernist landscape without a national politics.

To get a sense of direction at the pole, a visitor faces a Gordian knot. From the pole, there is only one direction—north. East and west are unfetchable. A north wind, blowing from the pole, becomes a south wind. To someone from the Northern Hemisphere the sun's position is a disconcerting right to be lost. Local time, as in "the sun set at midnight," is an utter mystery. People determine their position relative to the stars or the flow of polar ice. (When p-

*In an era of large geoscientific projects and concern over global climate, the continent has come into its own*

To counter the  
vast sameness,  
people plant  
flags to mark  
their camps

Station asked us where we were going to work, we took to offering them white paper napkins from the galley—a map, we said.) To counter the lack of specificity in the landscape, the vast sameness, people plant flags to mark their courses and camps. An eleven- by seventeen-inch colored nylon flag, flapping sharply in the breeze on the end of a six-foot bamboo pole, is a ubiquitous sign of scientific research in Antarctica.

**I**t was not science as we practice it today but a desire for acclaim and adventure and a wish to settle the geography of the unknown, to tame space, that initially anchored the evanescent idea of the pole. Roald Amundsen, four companions, and sixteen Greenland dogs were the first to arrive at this undistinguished spot, on the afternoon of December 14, 1911. They re-

the pole by about half a mile.)

Amundsen and Scott were driven men, their personalities made more complex by their neurotic anxiety. Amundsen, "proud, aloof, and quarrelsome," in the words of one biographer, never got the respect he deserved for his unexcelled technical skill and his extraordinary achievement. Scott, "insecure," "vacillatory," and "diffident," in the words of the same biographer, was probably praised too highly in the face of a tragic failure (his party perished), a failure that could be traced in part to his own incompetence. On leaving the pole, Amundsen wrote in his journal, "And so, farewell, dear Pole. I do think we'll meet again." Scott wrote, "Gracious God! This is an awful place." Neither man would seem, cared a whit for where he had been, only for the mathematics, the accomplishment of it.

In a 1982 short story by Ursula Le Guin called "Sur," three women are the first to arrive at the pole—two Peruvians and a Chilean, on December 22, 1909. Their journey as arduous as Scott's or Amundsen's, is less grandiose, not so self-consciously heroic, and in pursuit of no fame. The nine women on the expedition, each of whom had had to employ a subterfuge to escape from a patriarchal family, decided to keep their journey a secret. Men so keen on making these discoveries, they agree, it would be unkind to deprive them of the pleasure. Besides, says one character, if the secret did get out now, years later "[Mr. Amundsen] would be terribly embarrassed and disappointed."

There is a barb in the last statement. Amundsen never appreciated the company of women; and Antarctica,

until very recently, was an exclusively male domain. (The male naval tradition, which Richard Byrd as well as Scott were part of, became deeply entrenched in Antarctica after World War II. American women were kept off the continent, largely at the insistence of the U.S. Navy, until 1969.)

After Scott departed on January 18, 1912, one, save the members of Richard Byrd's party, on an overflight on November 29, 1929, visited the pole again until October 31, 1956, when rear admiral landed in a DC-3 to officially close the U.S. research program. On January 1, 1988, the first tourists arrived by commercial aircraft, at \$34,900 per ticket. On January 2, 1989, the first tourists to travel overland on the continent arrived, having paid \$80,000 each to do so.

When I first arrived at Pole Station, I felt



mained in the area for almost four days, boxing the pole with three sets of readings so there would be no dispute about where they had been. (A black bunting flag fixed to a spare sledge runner and standing about fourteen nautical miles from the pole was Robert Falcon Scott's first indication, on January 16, 1912, that he had lost the race to Amundsen. A later review of readings taken by both parties led a navigational expert to conclude that, given the relative crudeness of their instruments, the sextant and theodolite, and the difficulty of employing them in the anomalous region of the pole, both parties had done remarkably well. Two men from Amundsen's group, Helmer Hanssen and Olav Bjaaland, probably came within at least 200 yards of the pole; Scott's group, making a small but critical error at the end, technically missed



nk many do, somewhat sheepish. My three-  
 flight in a heated cargo plane from  
 Murdo Station, the U.S. base on the coast,  
 d in no way compare to the struggles of  
 Amundsen and Scott; yet here I was, privileged  
 and at this remote and terrifyingly beautiful  
 e. I had been so disturbed by the insult to  
 English inherent in Amundsen's black flag,  
 ll that it signified about the coarseness and  
 ality of nationalism, of the colonial imagi-  
 on, so especially incongruous here, that I  
 brought a kite to fly. I flew it for an hour in  
 a-knot wind, at -36 degrees, over the na-  
 al flags, over the American flag that stands,  
 y, alone at the geographic south pole, and  
 ver the polar plain. It began as a symbolic  
 ire. As it quivered in my hand, however, I  
 n to appreciate something else. I could feel,  
 e kite dipped and soared, as it ran out on the  
 of the flow of air and luffed, the writhing,  
 the curvetting, of the wind. The wind  
 is the only animal that lives here.

om our small and tidy camp, Pole Station  
 ied like a mother ship on a white ocean, or  
 ice station. This environment, more than  
 other I know, its cold and silence, the abi-  
 stillness, the infrangible hollowness of the  
 the supreme indifference and intractability  
 ie snow plain, with its wild raisin-scatter  
 ecorites within, rests at the threshold of  
 e.

the evenings, when I stood those moments  
 re the sun, I thought of Scott, so disparaged

Of Amundsen, his profound unhappiness.  
 ought of the curious emptiness of their  
 evements, of how Byrd had written almost  
 ondently of his arrival at the pole, "One  
 there and that is about all there is for the  
 ag." The work here now is different, per-  
 less consciously vain. I thought of the  
 itists I'd met at Pole Station, whom I'd  
 wed to ask questions about seismometers,  
 ma rays, and radio telescopes.

ne work of these scientists, though it may be  
 n to some extent by pride or ambition or be-  
 nsation for insecurity or some grievous  
 d suffered in life, seemed to me humble in  
 damental sense. From a certain perspective  
 seem only to be trying to determine the co-  
 mates of intelligence, to address again the  
 stent questions of time and space. These  
 tions are larger by far than the imagination,  
 vision, of any one person. Where are we,  
 illy, in the universe? they are asking. What  
 e nature of the earth's magnetosphere, an  
 mous opera cape of energy trailing in the  
 wind? Is there periodicity in the heartbeat  
 e sun, enough to tell a farmer not to plant,  
 erman not to sail? Does the Gondwanan

bedrock of East Antarctica still track in some  
 seismic murmur the departure of peninsular In-  
 dia from its shores? Can one tell from bits of  
 snow and ice whether the planet is healthy, or  
 infer that we are, or were, only a turbulent and  
 passing episode in its journey through space?

Reminded of my own displacement on the  
 white plain where we worked, I habitually  
 sought on those evenings to bind myself into it,  
 into the flow of events. I recalled historical nar-  
 ratives; and the land. The surface here is infi-  
 nitely complex, its patterns of sunlight, minute  
 shadows, and glare endlessly attractive. The  
 trend of hard, dense runners of snow, called sas-  
 trugi, reveals the prevailing direction of the  
 wind. The plain itself is not really flat; it rolls  
 and is deceptively canted. In the distance lies a  
 ridge, a white palisade that could be two miles  
 or five miles away, thirty or a hundred feet high.  
 The eye struggles constantly with dimension.  
 The snow periodically collapses beneath one's  
 feet, with a sound like a wave dropping concus-  
 sively on a hard beach—I want, by these nota-  
 tions, to remember that I have been here.

On the way to my tent I would glance upwind  
 at our snow pit. Our desire was so simple. It  
 overlapped in some sense the professed aim of  
 art, to make what is significant—here, the  
 chemistry—apparent; to make what we know  
 intelligible. Like Scott and Amundsen we were  
 trying to locate ourselves, representatives of a  
 human community, in the relative terror of  
 space; and in time, within the complexities of  
 history. Whatever our individual failings might  
 be, many of us in the end, I think, wish only  
 this, to make some simple contribution, a good  
 one or an original one if that be our gift, to be  
 recalled as having done something worthy and  
 dignified with our time.

In remote Antarctica a reflective mind can  
 easily develop a great fondness for the human  
 race, a wistful sense of its fate, and not dwell on  
 its capacity for violence, for evil, for duplicity  
 and self-aggrandizement. The most poignant  
 words I know in Antarctic literature are the last  
 words Robert Falcon Scott wrote in his journal:  
 "For God's sake look after our people." In that  
 moment, knowing he was finished, Bowers  
 Wilson perhaps already dead in the tent  
 him, Evans and Oates dead on the trail behind  
 I don't know whom he meant by "our people."  
 he meant only the immediate family  
 he also glimpsed the outline of the  
 bility that haunts many.

I usually went to bed late  
 we were keeping, hoping the  
 calm so we could finish the  
 scan the sky, one foot in the tent  
 might hold somewhere  
 birds.

*In remote  
 Antarctica,  
 a reflective  
 mind can easily  
 develop a  
 fondness for the  
 human race and  
 not dwell on its  
 capacity for  
 violence*

# World Statement

## From the International Committee for the Defense of Salman Rushdie and his Publishers (USA)

On February 14th the Ayatollah Khomeini called on all Muslims to seek out and execute Salman Rushdie, the author of *The Satanic Verses*, and those involved in its publication worldwide.

We, the undersigned, insofar as we defend the right to freedom of opinion and expression as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, declare that we also are involved in the publication.

We are involved whether we approve the contents of the book or not. We appreciate the distress the book has aroused and deeply regret the loss of life associated with the ensuing conflict.

We call upon world opinion to support the right of all people to express their ideas and beliefs and to discuss them with their critics on the basis of mutual tolerance, free from censorship, intimidation and violence.

We request all world leaders to continue to repudiate the threats made against Salman Rushdie and those involved in his publication worldwide, and to take firm action to ensure that these threats are withdrawn.

Thousands of literary figures around the world have put their names to this statement. These are some of them:

Chinua Achebe, NIG	Antonia Fraser, UK	Lewis Lapham, USA	Ernesto Sabato, ARG
Fouad Ajami, USA	Northrup Frye, CAN	Doris Lessing, UK	Francoise Sagan, FRA
A. Alvarez, USA	Carlos Fuentes, MEX	Penelope Lively, UK	Amina Said, TUN
Eric Ambler, UK	Athol Fugard, SAF	Anthony Lukas, USA	Edward Said, USA
Yehuda Amichai, ISR	John Kenneth Galbraith, USA	Allison Lurie, USA	Michael Scammell, USA
Babakh Amir-Khosravi, IRN	Allen Ginsberg, USA	Manoocher Mahjoobi, IRN	Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., USA
Kingsley Amis, UK	Natalia Ginzburg, ITA	Norman Mailer, USA	Peter Schneider, GER
Martin Amis, UK	William Golding, UK	Anis Mansour, EGY	Anton Shammas, ISR
Michaelangelo Antonioni, ITA	Nadine Gordimer, SAF	Robert Massie, USA	William Shawcross, UK
John Ashbery, USA	Mary Gordon, USA	Don Mattera, SAF	Allan Sillitoe, UK
Margaret Atwood, CAN	Juan Goytisolo, SPA	Peter Matthiessen, USA	Milan Simecka, CZE
Julian Barnes, UK	Graham Greene, UK	Claude Mauriac, FRA	Claude Simon, FRA
Samuel Beckett, IRE	Germaine Greer, AUS	Vladimir Maximov, USSR	Andrei Sinyavsky, USSR
Suresrafi Behruz, IRN	Robert Haas, USA	Larry McMurtry, USA	Joseph Skvorecky, CAN
Saul Bellow, USA	David Halberstam, USA	Ved Mehta, USA	Susan Sontag, USA
Carl Bernstein, USA	Miklos Haraszti, HUN	James Michener, USA	Wole Soyinka, NIG
Clark Blaise, USA	Tahat Halman, TUR	Arthur Miller, USA	Muriel Spark, UK
Judy Blume, USA	Wilson Harris, BWI	Czeslaw Milosz, USA	George Steiner, UK
Sidney Blumenthal, USA	Seamus Heaney, IRE	Alberto Moravia, ITA	Robert Stone, USA
Edward Kamau Brathwaite, BWI	Joseph Heller, USA	Toni Morrison, USA	William Styron, USA
Breyten Breytenbach, SAF	John Hersey, USA	John Mortimer, UK	Veronique Tadjo, IVC
Andre Brink, SAF	Hendrik Hertzberg, USA	Daniel Moyano, ARG	Amir Taheri, IRN
Joseph Brodsky, USA	George V. Higgins, USA	Bharati Mukherjee, USA	Gay Talese, USA
Robert Caro, USA	Christopher Hitchens, UK	Alice Munro, CAN	Rene Tavernier, FRA
Noam Chomsky, USA	Michael Holroyd, UK	Edna O'Brien, IRE	Paul Theroux, USA
J. M. Coetzee, SAF	Maureen Howard, USA	Kole Omotoso, NIG	E. P. Thompson, UK
Catherine Cookson, UK	Irving Howe, USA	Michael Ondaatje, CAN	Lionel Tiger, USA
Avery Corman, USA	Eugene Ionesco, FRA	John Carlos Onetti, URU	Diana Trilling, USA
Don DeLillo, USA	John Irving, USA	Parviz Owsia, IRN	Milan Uhde, CZE
Joan Didion, USA	Kazuo Ishiguro, JPN	Grace Paley, USA	Ludvik Vaculik, CZE
Mohammed Djalali, IRN	Iraj Jannati-Ataie, IRN	Gyorgy Petri, HUN	Luisa Valenzuela, ARG
Gojko Djogo, YUG	Ryszard Kapuscinski, POL	Harold Pinter, UK	Mario Vargas Llosa, PER
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# USERS, LIKE ME

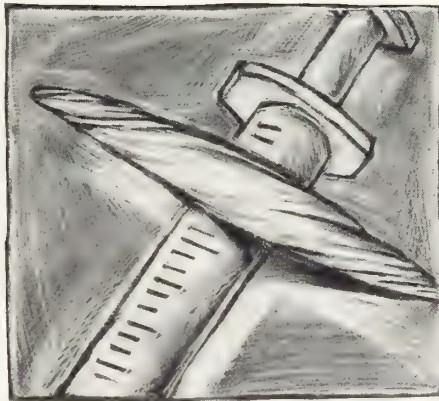
Membership in the Church of Drugs

By Gail Regier

**P**rofiles of typical drug users, in the newspapers and on TV, obscure the fact that many users aren't typical. I used to do coke with a violinist who was the most sheltered woman I've ever known. My mushroom connection was a fifty-year-old school-bus driver. And one of my high-school buddies, who moved \$1,000 worth of drugs a day in and out of his girlfriend's tattoo shop, would always extend credit to transients and welfare moms—debts he'd let slide after a while when they weren't paid.

It's easy to start thinking all users are media stereotypes: ghetto trash, neurotic child stars, mutinous suburban adolescents. Users, the media imagine, can't hold jobs or take care of their kids. Users rob liquor stores.

Real users, for all their chilly scorn of the straight world, buy into the same myths, but turn them inside out. The condescension becomes a kind of snobbery: we are different from the straight people, we are special, we are more free. We are spiritual adventurers. When I was twenty-four, which was not that long ago, my friends and I thought nothing was more hip than drugs, nothing more depraved, nothing more elemental. When we were messed up, we seemed to become exactly who we were,



and what could be more dangerous and splendid? Other vices made our lives more complicated. Drugs made everything simple and pure.

Anyone who hangs around drugs learns not to think too much about all this, learns to watch the bent spoon in the water glass.

Some of the users I knew were people with nothing left to lose. The rest of us

were in it only a little for the money, more than a lot for the nights we would drive to one place after another, in and out of people's parties, looking for a connection. It was a kind of social life, and we weren't in any hurry.

What we had in common was drugs. Getting high bound us together against outsiders, gathered us into a common purpose. No one else understood us and we understood each other so well.

**N**ew Year's eve 1979: We're all trying to cop some speed. My pal is driving and in the back seat, on probation and very uptight, is telling him the car is "rounding me," he believes us, but the game is gone before we arrive.

*\*I have changed the obvious reason*

Gail Regier's short stories have appeared in the *Atlantic* and other publications. He teaches in the English department at Auburn University.

*Drug dealing,  
with its arcana  
of mirrors and  
scales, was a  
guild mystery,  
a secret,  
forbidden craft*

stop where I used to work. The high school kids who work there always have grass and pills. Their stuff is not a hot, but it's real cheap. Restaurant people have a high rate of casual use, the word is, so much so you can't stand it without getting high.

The place is full of tired truck drivers and travelers with whiny kids. The hookers wear miniskirts and army jackets and all have colds. Our favorite waitress, Sherry, combines two parties to get in a booth. She's telling some trucker at the counter about her sexual problems with her husband. They tell her to wear leather pants and she sighs and says that doesn't work.

Fleetwood Mac songs shake the jukebox. Sherry brings us coffee and asks, "What's the deal?" Brian puts thumb and forefinger to his lips and mimes a toke from a joint. She goes back to the kitchen, and when she comes back tell us that Larry is holding. We take our coffee with us through the door marked AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL. Everybody in the kitchen is drunk. Two of the girls are playing the desert island game: If you could have only two drugs for the rest of your life, what would they be? Sherry pours us some cold duck from a bottle that was in the walk-in cooler.

There was a time when the rap here was all baseball and dates, but not anymore. Tonight the drizzle of distractions is as vacuous as any graduate seminar. The kids say the owner gives them shit for coming to work stoned. They need their job, but they know how they want to live. I tell them that the Church of Drugs has its own rituals and rules, and its members are a martyred elite. Brian tells Sherry about acid and stained glass. Guy tells the dishwasher how to tell if it's his starter or his alternator that's bad. The kids listen. They are impressed by us. They want to be like us.

Drug dealers on TV are vampires only, smooth, psychotic, sexy, human paradigms of the narcotic they sell. Larry is a skinny punk who is studying auto body at the vocational high school. Wearing a GMC cap and a long, stained apron, he stands behind a grease-blackened grill covered with steaks and bacon and skillets as black with eggs.

"Watch this shit," he tells another aproned kid, and motions to us to follow him. The kid protests that he'll get behind. Larry leads us back to the storeroom, past shelves of #10 cans and signs that read ALL DELIVERIES C.O.D. and ABSOLUTELY NO FIRE ARMS ALLOWED ON THESE PREMISES. He takes a baggie from his gym bag and shows us some speeders he says are pharmaceutical. The black capsules have the right markings on them, but they unscrew too easily and the bone-white powder inside isn't bitter

enough. We tell him no thanks, but buy a bag from him for a dollar.

When I was selling drugs I made a lot of money, but I usually got stoned on the profits. I was black money and it seemed the highs I bought with it were free and therefore sweeter. I was a college dropout with a kid and a nervous wife, worked as a cook in a Mexican cafe fifty hours a week and brought home \$200. For that \$200 I could buy half a kilo of smokable, break it up into finger bags, and double my money. Some meant I always had drugs, though we did that New Year's eve. Dealing, with its arcana of mirrors and scales, was a guild mystery, a secret, forbidden craft. It was a ticket to play; I couldn't get to any other way. I got to know guys who drove Cadillacs and carried foreign passports, guys who cooked acid and smoked in basement labs, women who wore lots of rings and called every man Jones.

Brian and I smoke the joint on the sidewalk porch of the truck stop. The rain, we decide, is very righteous. Eighteen-wheelers grind and hiss their gaudy lights onto the interstate. Diane, a shoe-eyed, peach-skinned fifteen-year-old, comes out and vamps us for a couple of bits. I tell her about those cocaine nights when the room fills with snowflakes sitting down slowly as they were under water. She's kissing Brian. I've got my hand up her short skirt, but she refuses to get in the car with us.

Downtown by the hospital, we get in a cabation with some ambulance guys with their siren top on. Bald tires skid on the wet pavement. Brian decides to let me drive. We stop in my house, where my wife is watching *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve*. Her eyes are red from crying, but she tries to smile.

"Dan and Jan were here," she says. "Do you remember we invited them?"

I look in the refrigerator for wine. There isn't any.

"Brian and Guy are in the car," I say. "I've got to run them home."

"Then will you come back?"

"Come with us if you want." I know she won't. Our son's asleep upstairs.

"Don't get speed," she says.

"We're not."

"You get mean when you do speed."

I want to get wired. I head for the door.

We make the Steak N' Ale. In a room where there would be black guys pushing stuff out the sidewalk out front, but this is Springfield, Missouri, and we can't score. The manager's connection, isn't around. At the bar we get shots of whiskey. The place is full of prettiness and even the ones who don't drink are fun, but we're not looking for girls.



Guy says, "We should go see Casey." Casey is old guy who sold black-market penicillin in t-war Europe. Brian doesn't know Casey but knows he's expensive, and he fusses about it. But Guy and I are studying on how good Casey's crystal meth is and how Casey could get a set of points so we could hit it.

On our way we boost three wine glasses and a tle of Korbelt from somebody's table. Sitting in the car, we drink to ourselves and the dying r. Brian wets his fingertip in the champagne strokes it gently round and round the rim of his glass, making space noises rise from the tal. We all do it, but then the noises turn oky and we get paranoid. We drop the ses out the window and drive.

Prudence is sitting on the front porch watching the rain. She kisses me and I taste her gue. I introduce my friends and she kisses m.

Casey's inside."

Has he got meth?"

he shrugs. The business is Casey's gig. Prudence is twenty and has a cat named Lenin and a year-old baby. She's kept the job she had re she moved in with Casey: evening attendance at a laundry near the college. Her place is cleanest in town. My buddies and I would pin to wash some jeans and score a little pot, end up hanging around all evening eating dy bars and flirting with Prudence.

On the weekends Prudence ran a perpetual port sale, things she made and stuff taken in er from customers with cash-flow problems. theses and belt buckles, pipes and bottles, tleg eight-tracks and cassettes with typed la, old skin mags, car stereos and CB radios ling cut wires.

The living room is brightly lit as always; Prudence leaves her pole lamps on twenty-four irs a day. Casey is sprawled among pillows on old couch ripe with cigarette scars, culling ks and seeds from some dope on the glassped coffee table. Framed beneath the glass large-denomination bills from several South erican countries. Casey's favorite objects lithe shelf below: brass pipes with small screw ings, ceramic ashtrays from the commune at i, a rifle scope he uses to case visitors coming the rutted driveway.

A candy dish holds pills—speckled birds and tleg ludes coloring a base of Tylenol with cine, bought over-the-counter in Canada. ey offers us some, and I sift thumb and forefer carefully through the pile and pick out black beauties for tomorrow. Brian starts to a handful and I sign him not to. Casey fs codeine the whole time we talk.

Prudence and I go to the kitchen to mix a t jar of gin and orange juice, stay there a lit-

tle while to touch and neck. She has painted everything in the kitchen white, walls and floors and cabinets and fixtures, and in the glare of many bare bulbs the room is stark as a laboratory. White-painted plaster peels off the walls in loops and splinters. There are no dishes or pans; Prudence buys only things she can cook in her toaster oven.

Last time I was over, Casey went after Prudence with a ratchet wrench and I had to talk him down. As we mix the drinks she tells me how she and Casey dropped acid together and now things are better. He's even starting to like the boy. I tell her how my four-year-old thinks acid is the best trick going, because when I'm tripping I play with him so much. We take baths together, drenching the floor with our bathtub games, while my wife sits on the toilet lid, watching us with her bright blue eyes.

On the floor, Lenin and the baby take turns peekabooing and pouncing. I'm surprised the baby isn't scared. I've changed my mind and dropped one of the beauties and I'm feeling edgy and fast and tricky. Lenin rubs himself against my ankles and I grow paranoid.

"You want to help me water the plants?" Prudence asks.

We climb the rungs nailed to the closet wall, push up the trapdoor, and crawl into the attic. Gro-lights illuminate twenty marijuana plants set in plastic tubs. Casey has run a hose up through the wall. I turn the water on and off for her as she crawls back and forth across the rafters on her hands and knees.

Downstairs, I can hear Brian on a rap. "Radiation will be the next great vice. They already use it with chemo to kill cancer. Soon they'll discover wavelengths that reproduce the effects of every known drug. The cops will be able to spot users easy 'cause we'll all be bald."

**P**rudence digs out a Mamas and Papas tape and plays "Straight Shooter." Casey tells us how some junkies will put off shooting-up until the craving starts, like getting real hungry before a steak dinner. I listen, but to me the addict world is as mythical as Oz. I've met junkies, but they were in town only accidentally and soon moved on to Kansas City or New Orleans. I'd like a symphony orchestra or a pro sports team, a junkie population needs a large urban center to support it.

Casey says that the word "heroin" is a contraction of the German word *heroisch*, meaning "powerful, even in small amounts." It's on a bookshelf. A *rogue's* *story of* *the* *Cocteau*, *Genet*, *de Sade*' *leather*, *Story of* *Cr* *Burroughs* story he's ju

*Like  
a symphony  
orchestra,  
a junkie  
population  
needs a large  
urban center  
to support it*

*It wasn't  
the drugs my  
wife had always  
hated, it was the  
fellowship the  
Church of  
Drugs provided*

ciety dedicated to discovering the Flesh Tree described in an ancient Mayan codex. This is the rare and sacred plant from which human life originally derived. According to Burroughs, flesh is really a vegetable, and the human system of reproduction is a perversion of its true nature.

Casey talks very seriously about acquiring his own Tree of Flesh on his next trip to Mazatlán. He regards the story as journalism rather than parable—or seems to. We spend some time discussing how to care for the Tree of Flesh once Casey obtains it.

Guy asks Casey about the crystal meth.

"You don't want speed," I say. I'm feeling very articulate now. "What you want is a hit of junk." Guy shakes his head, but Brian looks thoughtful. "For ten minutes," I say, "you'll be as high as you ever thought you wanted to be. Then in half an hour you'll be as high as you really ever wanted to be."

"And then?" Guy says.

"You'll want *more*."

Inside the Church of Drugs, heroin users are an elite within the elite, saints of Instant Karma and Instant Death. Their stark games raise them to a place beyond the hype and chatter.

"When you shoot up," I tell them, "you're alone before the abyss. That's what shooting up is for."

The first time I shot up was the most frightened I've ever been. For me the fear was part of the high.

Guy and Brian have never done needles, but Brian is hard for it and helps me work Guy around. "We won't hit you in the vein," I assure him. "Just in muscle tissue, like a vaccination." We each give Casey a twenty. He drags an army-surplus ammo box from under the couch and rummages through it. Prudence puts the baby on the rug and goes to hunt up a needle.

When she returns with one, Casey measures out the heroin and I cook it in a teaspoon dark with the flames of many lighters. When it is like molten silver, Casey loads, taps bubbles out of the rig, and hits Guy in the shoulder before he can change his mind. Brian thrusts his arm forward eagerly, his eyes ashimmer with the romance of drugs, and I put the needle in him. They both vomit, the way almost everybody does when they get their wings, then go serenely on the nod. The baby is startled and then amused by their upheavals. We get them settled and empty the bucket we had handy for them, then Casey and Prudence hit each other. She has a glass of gin in one hand and breaks it on the coffee table when the spasms hit her.

Last to do up, I take my time, pricking the point of the needle into the vein of my inside forearm, easing back a little before I push the trigger. Wisps of blood claw up in the glass wand

and a white light like a fist of thorns shoves everything away.

Later we're stirring around again and start to talk. The baby has been crying for a while. Brian wipes the shards of broken glass off the coffee table onto the rug in front of the baby, who quiets and reaches for these shiny new toys.

After a few cuts the baby learns that broken glass can hurt him. He is crying again. He tries to push the pieces away, but the splinters stick to his hands. He rubs his small fists together. When we all start laughing, we can't help it, he gets cute. Prudence claps her hands and cheers up his efforts. He rubs his hands against his face and the blood spots it like clown makeup. The baby cries so hard he starts choking. It's very funny. Then he starts gnawing at the splinters between his fingers, and that is very funny too.

Casey gets straight first and washes the blood from the baby's face. Guy can't walk, so I help him outside into the cold air. Brian and Prudence are messing around out by the car.

Casey comes out on the porch. His fingers are streaked with iodine. He says, "Hey man."

I say Yeah.

Casey looks at Brian. "Don't let me see him back here."

**T**hese days I'm a guy who goes six months a year without smoking a joint. I got out of the way a lot of people do. One day I looked around and saw that I was missing a lot of what my nerves were bad, parties bored me, all my friends were druggies. I quit selling and then quit using. You know the story.

Prudence still lives in Springfield, in the same house north of the railroad yards. Casey's gone but the carport sale continues. Her babies are ten, and maybe there are some fine white ones at the corners of his mouth. Maybe they're all in my imagination.

When I quit drugs I thought the fighting in my marriage would stop. It didn't. It wasn't the drugs my wife had always hated, it was the fellowship the Church of Drugs provided. She wants me home. I'm still not there.

One night last year when I didn't want to go home, I took a manic-depressive writer's 'shroom run to a stucco structure known as the House With No Brains. Everyone there was younger than me. Some folks had heroin and tried to missionary us into doing up. I just said no, but for weeks after that—listen, this is important—for a long time after that, I thought about junk, talked about it to people, started once to drive to the House but turned back every time I picked up a spoon or struck a match. I thought about needle drugs, about how good and fine things could be.



# MMM, MMM, SIMULACRUM

Barbeque: A postmodern grilling  
By Frank Gannon

Among the works discussed in this essay:

*The All-American Barbecue Book*, by Rich Davis and Shifra Stein, Vintage, 241 pages, \$8.95 paper.

*Barbeque'n With Bobby*, by Bobby Seale, Ten Speed Press, 142 pages, \$12.95 paper.

*Real Barbecue*, by Greg Johnson and Vince Staten, Harper & Row, 261 pages, \$8.95 paper.

There has been, needless to say, a great deal written on the subject of barbeque, although no barbeque books have ever appeared on the *New York Times* best-seller list. Still, for those of us who are a tad hipper, a hair more around-the-block-and-back, barbeque is a subject that raises as much controversy as anything anybody with a good haircut and a postmodern sensibility is likely to come up with.

We stole this idea, like so much else, from the Indians. Late in the sixteenth century, John White, who was with the settlement on Roanoke Island, wrote about the Indians he saw "broyling their fishe over the flame—they took great heed that they bee not burnt."

In 1705 Robert Beverley wrote *The History and Present State of Virginia*. In this little publication, barbeque bigwig Beverley goes on and on about this Indian thing: "The meat was laid . . . upon Sticks rais'd upon forks at some distance above the live Coale, which heats more gently and dries up the Gravy."

Writing about barbeque has had a long, storied history. Yet the question remains: What would a modern person, a guy whose sensibilities were honed on the cutting edge of things as they really are, what would that guy have to say



about the recent writing about barbeque? I thought about it for a long time. Then I realized the truth.

I was that person.

I was that guy.

On the cutting edge of barbeque, there are many voices. In *The All-American Barbecue Book*, Rich Davis and Shifra Stein write, "Crust and juice—that's the art of barbe-

cue. We can teach you the 'how,' but you must perfect the art."

In *Real Barbecue*, Greg Johnson and Vince Staten rely on an official government source, always a good idea when you are walking on the cutting edge: "The USDA says barbeque is '[m]eat that] shall be cooked by the gradual action of heat resulting from the burning of hard wood or the hot coals, therefrom, in a pit or over an open fire to assume the usual charred surface. This includes the formation of a crust on the surface' and Staten suggests that the USDA "guarantees that we, as consumers, get what we pay for: no hog or heifer will ever be barbecued without first having the crust on the surface of the meat. . . . The barbecue sauce has been slathered on the meat."

Elizabeth Blythe, author of *Barbecue: The Temple of the Grilled*, writes, "The barbecue is a food that is as much a part of the American identity as the hamburger, hot links, burger, and ribs."

Frank Gannon is the author of *Vanna Karenina*, a collection of humor pieces.

I felt  
like calling  
Northrop  
Frye on his  
ontological  
assumptions,  
but it's hard to  
get motivated  
with a plate  
of pulled pork  
in front of you

misunderstanding has also insulted our taste buds. For righteously good, Southern, Texas-style hickory-smoke barbeque, we cannot continue with the bottleback recipe method of putting store-bought barbeque sauce on raw meat and slapping it under the oven broiler or over a hot pit of charcoal."

A question occurs. What is barbeque? It's not a school or even a movement. It's not a manifesto, and it's not just another "bright idea." It's not just a bunch of foul language, and it's not a bunch of guys lined up protesting *The Last Temptation of Christ*. It's a very difficult thing to pin down, barbeque.

Other descriptions or forms or significations or synchronic substructures are also deficient. To use any *significatum* is to obfuscate the issue.

Thus, methodology becomes a key concern. Since barbeque is not a school or a movement, there is no way to reduce this concept to an *a priori* bunch of you know what. Barbeque is not a thing to be dissected by philosophers. It is an *activity*. People *do* it, just as surely as they emphasize words by italicizing them. People just *do* it, that's all. And a slavish attention to previous methodological concepts is pointless, outmoded, underprivileged, and overextended.

People just *do* it. Although usually not in the winter. At least where I live, across the street from Noam Chomsky.

Davis and Stein "locate" barbeque in an unusual area, and it is, quite frankly, difficult for this critic. This critic has hardly ever been in that area, and if he was, he probably was just accompanying a friend. Consider the following, from *The All American Barbecue Book*:

Wine with the barbecue? Why not? There are a number of wines that taste fine with barbecue. Our friend Darryl Corti of Corti Brothers wineries in Sacramento, California, recommends generally young, medium-bodied, fairly fruity red wines such as the Zinfandel, Gamay, Pinot, and some of the Cabernet.

All these Gamay people. Where do they all come from? All these Gamay people. Where do they all belong?

CRITIC: What will you boys have?

POET: We both want the special barbeque plate with the Brunswick stew.

CRITIC: POET: And napkins.

CRITIC: And what will you be having to drink? We have a good solid Gamay by the glass, and we also have a Baco Noir that is very nice.

POET: Tea.

CRITIC: POET: Lots of napkins.

In *Real Barbecue*, Johnson and Staten place the locus of barbeque squarely in the realm of the imagination. As they eloquently state, "Reading about barbeque is like hearing about a

hot date: It's interesting, but it's nothing of being there." Thus, for Johnson and Staten barbeque is not fundamentally definable within the context of language. Analogy, no matter how many times the authors mention "these juicy chunks," is always an inadequate *simulacrum* of the object it

Yet Johnson and Staten clearly see the Wallace Stevens-like connection between the barbeque world they create is *there*. It is a *simulacrum*, but it is, in fact, indistinguishable from the world we live in. Consider the writers' journey to that area of the poetic landscape they call Hook's Bar-B-Q, in Milledgeville, Georgia.

Flannery O'Connor never frequented Hook's Bar-B-Q—that we know of—but the hero of her novel *Wise Blood*, Hazel Motes, certainly will have. Once you see Hook's, it isn't hard to believe that Hook's and O'Connor inhabited the same rain. Going to Hook's Bar-B-Q is like taking a long way back in time, before paved roads and air chutes, to when there was a distinguishable South. Hook's is a general store—very general—no juke-joint trimmings: a juke box, dinette table, beer signs... But stop by on the weekend and Hook's is jumping.

I've been to Hook's, and what they say is hell of a *simulacrum* for the place itself.

But, indeed, can the reader trust the voice that he is "reading" now? I doubt that, can you? The truth of the matter is, you've got to be very careful reading about barbeque if, for example, you've shared a lot of baby-back ribs and Brunswick stew with, to name one guy, Northrop Frye. That guy will wear you out. Many times I felt like calling Frye on some of his ontological assumptions, but it's hard to get really motivated with a plate of pulled pork in front of you and a cold one in your hand.

I remember a lot of great eating, lots of upkins, and plenty of tall cold ones with Frye.

Bobby Seale looks at the dialectic from another point of view. Seale looks up the word itself in the dictionary. This act alone is a startling departure from accepted methods. But what he finds is truly shocking. Barbeque isn't in his dictionary. Instead there's *barbecue*.

This upsets Seale's sense of poetics, and he reacts accordingly. "I began to feel that the use of spelling represented something drab, or, let's say, 'square,' as we used to say in the 1950s."

Concerning the *thing in itself*, Seale's methodology borders on the sacrilegious. He advocates, 1) smoking ribs until they are almost done and then freezing them for later; 2) using gallons of gallons of Liquid Smoke.

Both of these practices are, for the critic, problematical. It is difficult, for instance to





# A NATION OF

## Federal gun registration neither protects

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Form 4473 is the only federal protection standing between you and anyone who wants to buy a gun and kill: nearly a quarter of the criminals who use guns buy them over-the-counter. Mandated by the 1968 Gun Control Act—something of a misnomer, since the law affords the government little control over gun production, sales, or ownership—the form must be filled out by buyers when they purchase a gun at one of the nation's 239,637 gun dealers. But although the bureau produces the forms, it is prohibited by law from using the completed forms to determine how many guns are sold and to whom. Nor does the bureau ensure that the forms are filled out correctly. It is the gun dealers who are responsible for making sure that applicants fill out the form—in reality, they make no attempt to verify buyers' answers—and it is the dealers who keep the forms on file. Thus, after Patrick Edward Purdy filled out this form last August 3, it simply remained with Clair Cooper, owner of the Sandy Trading Post.

The "transferee" may buy the gun and then legally give it or sell it to anyone without further paperwork. When a new AK-47 was "transferred" to Patrick Purdy for \$349.95, he kept it for himself.

When Congress passed the Gun Control Act, it didn't anticipate that Americans would desire to own civilian semi-automatic (each shot caused by a separate pull of the trigger) versions of military automatic (multiple firings caused by keeping the trigger depressed) weapons. Thus, the law allows the Russian-designed semi-automatic AK-47 to be categorized as a "rifle," even though the weapon is easily altered to be automatic. Typically, such weapons, which are often used by gangs and drug dealers, can fire 300 to 1,200 rounds a minute. Their bullets penetrate cars, walls, and police officers' vests. Law enforcement officials have long sought to outlaw assault rifles. The National Rifle Association insists the AK-47 and other assault rifles are used for "hunting" by hundreds of thousands of sportsmen. Even President Bush—a lifetime member of the NRA—seems to doubt this; in March his administration suspended imports of most semi-automatic weapons. Purdy, of course, had no intention of hunting.

Joseph D. McNamara is chief of police in San Jose, California, and the author of two novels, *The First Directive* and *Fatal Command*.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY BUREAU OF FIREARMS TRANSACTIONS  
PART I — INTRA-STATE C

NOTE: Prepare in original only. All entries on this form must be made in ink.

SECTION A — MUST BE COMPLETED PERSONALLY BY TRANSFEREE

1 TRANSFEREE'S (Buyer's) NAME (Last, First, Middle)  
*Purdy Patrick E*

5 RESIDENCE ADDRESS (No. Street City State ZIP Code)  
*17985 Davis St San Jose CA 95131*

8 CERTIFICATION OF TRANSFEREE (Buyer): — An untruthful statement or a no inserted in the box at the right of the question.

a Are you under indictment or information in any court for a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year? "A formal accusation of a crime made by a prosecuting attorney as distinguished from an indictment presented by a grand jury."

b Have you been convicted in any court of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year? NOTE: A "yes" answer is necessary if the judge could have given a sentence of more than one year. Also, "yes" answer is required if a conviction has been discharged, set aside, or dismissed pursuant to an expungement or rehabilitation statute. However, a "crime punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year" does not include a conviction which has been set aside under the Federal Youth Corrections Act, as evidenced by a copy of the certificate issued under 18 USC 5021.

I hereby certify that the answers to the above are true. I am prohibited from purchasing and/or possessing a firearm, or from making a written statement or the exhibiting of any false or misleading information.

TRANSFEREE'S (Buyer's) SIGNATURE  
*Patrick E. Purdy*

SECTION B — TO BE COMPLETED BY TRANSFEROR

THIS PERSON DESCRIBED IN SECTION A

9 TYPE OF IDENTIFICATION (Driver's license or other which shows name, date of birth, place of residence and signature)  
*02*

On the basis of (1) the statements in Section A, (2) the laws and Ordinances, it is my belief that it is not unlawful for the person identified in Section A to possess the firearm described in Section C.

11 TYPE (Pistol, Revolver, Rifle, Shotgun, etc.)  
*RIFLE*

12 MODEL  
*AK-47*

16 TRADE/CORPORATE NAME AND ADDRESS (Hand stamp may be used)  
*SANDY TRADING POST  
38915  
SANDY*

THE PERSON MAKING TRANSFER

18 TRANSFEROR'S (Seller's) SIGNATURE  
*C. O. Cooper*

AT F F 4473 (5300.9) PART I (2-85)



# KILLED KILLERS

by Police Chief Joseph D. McNamara

Approved: OMB No. 1512-0129 (2/29/88)

TRANSFEROR'S TRANSACTION SERIAL NUMBER		565	
IONS ON REVERSE)			
3 WEIGHT		4 RACE	
150#		W	
5 PLACE OF BIRTH (City and State or City and Foreign Country)		7	
10 64		Pierce Co Wa.	
Each question must be answered with a "yes"			
Is the transferor a convicted felon?		NO	
Is the transferor addicted to, marijuana, or other narcotic drug?		NO	
Is the transferor a mentally defective or committed to a mental institution?		NO	
Is the transferor a member of the Armed Forces or a reserve member?		NO	
Is the transferor a resident in the United States?		NO	
Has the transferor ever been a citizen of the United States and renounced his citizenship?		NO	
The transferor understands that the making of any false oral or written statement or action is a crime punishable as a felony			
DATE		8-3-88	
REVERSE)			
SLOWING MANNER			
ATION			
3			
and (3) the information in the current list of Publicly Available Firearms (P.A.F.) described below and			
15. MANUFACTURER (and importer, if any)			
NORRICO			
FEDERAL FIREARMS LICENSE NO. (or stamp may be used)			
9-93-003-01-9M-49168			
LETS ITEMS 18 THROUGH 20		20 TRANSACTION DATE	
		8-3-88	

It's not hard to lie here, for if the answer is actually "yes," no one will know. Even a truthful "no" can have little meaning; although Purdy's response was technically correct, he had previously been charged with attempted robbery, criminal conspiracy, resisting arrest, illegal possession of a dangerous weapon, solicitation of sex, drug possession, receiving stolen property, and firing a pistol in a national forest. These charges were either plea-bargained down to misdemeanors or dropped.

The second part of this question requires a "yes" only if the buyer has been *involuntarily* committed to a mental institution; it does not probe further. A background check could have determined that Purdy had attempted suicide while in custody for a gun charge. He was also collecting Social Security disability benefits for drug abuse. That Patrick Purdy was mentally unstable became quite clear: a police search of his hotel room five months after he bought the AK-47 turned up toy soldiers, tanks, and jeeps all over the room, including in the refrigerator and shower.

Like most states, Oregon, where Purdy made his purchase, does not require a waiting period to enable the state to clear a buyer of a rifle or shotgun. Only Hawaii, Illinois, and Pennsylvania do. (A number of states require a waiting period for the purchase of handguns.) Yet state laws cannot guarantee sufficient protection: stronger federal legislation is required. California has one of the most stringent gun-control laws in the nation, but Purdy was able to purchase guns there.

On January 17, five months after signing this form in Sandy, Oregon, Purdy walked into the schoolyard of his former elementary school in Stockton, California, wearing a flak jacket, army fatigues, and a gas mask. He then opened fire with his AK-47. In about six minutes he fired 100 rounds, killing five children and nine children and a teacher. He then killed himself with a handgun that he had brought with him after dutifully filling out another form.

# MUCK AND ITS ENTANGLEMENTS

Cleaning the outhouse

By John Berger

**I**n one of his books, Milan Kundera dismisses the idea of God because, according to him, no God would have designed a life in which shitting was necessary. The way Kundera asserts this makes one believe it's more than a joke. He is expressing a deep affront. And such an affront is typically elitist. It transforms a natural repugnance into a moral shock. Elites have a habit of doing this. Courage, for instance, is a quality that all admire. But only elites condemn cowardice as vile. The dispossessed know very well that under certain circumstances everyone is capable of being a coward.

In spring I clear out and bury the year's shit. The shit of my family and of friends who visit us. It has to be done once a year and usually, as last year, on a day in May. Earlier it might be frozen and later the flies come. There are a lot of flies in the summer because of the cattle. A man telling me about his solitude not long ago said:

Last winter I got to the point of missing the flies.

**F**irst I dig a hole in the earth—about the size of a grave but not so deep. The edges need to be well cut so the barrow doesn't slip when I tip it to unload. While I'm standing in the hole, Mick, the neighbor's dog, comes by. I've known him since he was a pup, but he has never seen me there before him, less tall than a dwarf. His sense of scale is disturbed and he begins to bark.

However calmly I start the operation of removing the shit from the outhouse, transporting it in the barrow, and emptying it into the hole, there always comes a moment when I feel a kind of anger rising in me. Against what or whom?

*John Berger lives in a small peasant village in the French Alps that is the setting for his recent fiction. His first novel, *A Painter of Our Time*, has just been reissued by Pantheon.*

This anger, I think, is atavistic. In all languages shit is a swearword of exasperation, something one wants to be rid of. Cats cover their own by scraping earth over it with their paws; men swear by theirs. Naming the stuff shoveling finally provokes an irrational anger. Shit!

Cow and horse dung, as muck goes, are relatively agreeable. You can even become nostalgic about them. They smell of fermented grass and on the far side of their smell there is hay and grass. Chicken shit is disagreeable and raspy in the throat because of the quantity of ammonia. When you are cleaning out the henhouse you're glad to go to the door and take a deep breath of fresh air. Pig and human excrement, however, smell the worst because men and pigs are carnivorous and their appetites are indiscriminate. The smell includes the sickeningly sweet one of decay. And on the far side of that there is death.

While shoveling, images of Paradise come into my mind. Not the angels and heaven trumpets, but the walled garden, the fountain of pure water, the fresh colors of flowers, the pale blue and white cloth spread on the grass, ambrosia. The dream of purity and freshness was born from the omnipresence of muck and dust. This clarity is surely one of the deepest in the human imagination, intimately connected with the idea of home as a shelter—shelter against all things, including dirt.

In the world of modern hygiene, purity has become a purely metaphoric or moralistic idea. It has lost all sensuous reality. By contrast, poor homes in Turkey the first act of hospitality is the offer of lemon eau de cologne to apply to the visitor's hands, arms, neck, face. Which reminds me of a Turkish proverb about ethics: "He thinks he is a sprig of parsley in the shit of the world."



The shit slides out of the barrow when it's up-  
ned with a slurping dead weight. And the  
sweet stench goads, nags teleologically.  
The smell of decay and from this—the smell of  
refraction, of corruption. The smell of mor-  
tality, for sure. But it has nothing to do—as pu-  
nism, with its loathing for the body, has  
consistently taught—with shame or sin or evil.  
The colors are burnished gold, dark brown, black:  
the colors of Rembrandt's painting of  
Alexander the Great in his helmet.

A story from the village school that Yves,  
son, tells me:

It's autumn in the orchard. A rosy apple falls  
the grass near a cowpat. Friendly and polite,  
cowshit says to the apple: "Good morning,  
Madame la Pomme. How are you feeling?"

She ignores the remark, for she considers  
a conversation beneath her dignity.

It's fine weather, don't you think, Madame  
Pomme?"

Silence.

You'll find the grass here very sweet, Ma-  
dame la Pomme!"

Again, silence.

At this moment a man walks through the or-  
chard, sees the rosy apple, stoops to pick it up.  
He bites into the apple, the cowshit, irre-  
sistible, says: "See you in a little while, Ma-  
dame la Pomme!"

What makes shit such a universal joke is that  
an unmistakable reminder of our duality, of  
our soiled nature and of our will to  
glory. It is the ultimate *lèse-majesté*.

As I empty the third barrow of shit, a chaf-  
inch is singing in one of the plum trees. No-  
body knows exactly why birds sing as much as  
they do. What is certain is that they don't sing  
to deceive themselves or others. They sing to  
announce themselves as they are. Compared  
to the transparency of bird song, our talk is  
opaque, because instead of embodying truth, we  
are obliged to search for it.

Think of the people whose shit I'm transport-  
ing. So many different people. Shit is what is  
behind undifferentiated: the waste from en-  
ergy received and burned up. This energy has  
various forms, but for us humans, with our hu-  
man shit, all energy is partly verbal. I'm talking  
to myself as I lift the shovel, prudently, so that  
nothing much doesn't fall off onto the outhouse  
floor. Evil begins not with decomposing matter  
but with the human capacity to talk  
oneself into.

The eighteenth-century picture of the noble  
man was shortsighted. It confused a distant  
ancestor with the animals he hunted. All ani-

mals live within the laws of their species. They  
know no pity (though they know bereavement);  
they are never perverse. This is why hunters  
once dreamed of certain animals as being natu-  
rally noble—of having a spiritual grace that  
matched their physical one. It was never the  
case with man.

Nothing in the nature around us is evil. This  
needs to be repeated since one of the human  
ways of talking oneself into inhuman acts is to  
cite the supposed cruelty of nature. The just-  
hatched cuckoo, blind and featherless, has a  
special hollow like a dimple on its back, so that  
it can hump out of the nest, one by one, its com-  
panion fledglings. Cruelty is the result of talking  
oneself into the infliction of pain or into the con-  
scious ignoring of pain already inflicted. The  
cuckoo doesn't talk itself into anything. Nor  
does the wolf.

The story of the Temptation with the other  
apple (not Madame la Pomme) is well told:  
"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall  
not surely die." She hasn't eaten yet. Yet these  
words of the serpent are either the first lie or  
the first play with empty words.

Kierkegaard (Shit!—half a shovelful has fall-  
en off) knew what he was talking about when  
he defined diabolic discourse as prattle. Evil's  
mask of innocence. "Such phraseology is need-  
ed," said George Orwell, "if one wants to name  
things without calling up mental pictures of  
them."

Perhaps the insouciance with which cows shit  
is part of their peacefulness, part of the patience  
that allows them to be thought of in certain cul-  
tures as sacred.

Evil hates everything that has been physically  
created. The first act of this hatred is to separate  
the order of words from the order of  
what they denote.

Mick the dog follows me as I trundle the  
barrow to the hole. No more sheep! I tell him.  
The previous spring, palling with another dog,  
he killed three. His tail goes down. After killing  
he was chained up for three months. The tone  
of my half-joking voice, the word *sheep*, the  
memory of the chain make him cringe a little.  
But in his head he doesn't call spilt blood some-  
thing else, and he stares into my eyes.

Not far from where I dug the hole, a flower  
is coming into flower. The wind has  
changed to the south, for this time it carries  
the lilac through the shit. It smells  
mixed with a lot of honey.

This perfume takes me back to  
childhood, to the first garden. I  
suddenly from that time know  
both smells, from long before  
had a name.

The foul,  
sweet stench  
goads. The  
smell of  
mortality,  
for sure

# AMERICANA

By Mona Simpson

My father used to say, by way of consolation for my beautiful ten-year-old sister's B+s, "Don't worry. You know what happened to the very smartest, straight-A students I knew in high school? They ended up college professors. Teachers. And you know how much they make?" During that time, my sister was practicing to be a majorette and I remember her stern, perfect leg sticking straight up, wrapped in a saddle shoe. My father grabbed that blunted foot. The leg trembled in its point, a baton tilted in her mouth.

I was under the mahogany table, my glasses sliding down over my nose, doing math. I knew I was very advanced for my age. My father noticed me then, my scribbling silenced by the spectacle of a somersault. "Like your brother here who's practicing to be Einstein and already ruined his eyes." This was in the carpeted dining room. But his gaze didn't stay long on me. We were both distracted by the thump and then blurring colors of her cartwheel—she wore bright red panties under her short skirt.

I became a college professor. Tenured by Princeton five years ago at twenty-seven. My father was shocked, though he never exactly said so, by

the amount of money I earned. I made a point of sending expensive presents in brand names I knew he'd know. One year, the man in the electronics store had me almost convinced of a new kind of television from Japan—more lines per inch, which makes the picture better. I believed his point, I saw the resolution on the display screen, my credit card was already in his machine when I decided no, I couldn't do it. It didn't matter which was better. In Kansas, they knew Sony. And when I heard their voices on the phone—and the hushed impressed noises of their best friends, the Dweebles—I knew I'd made the right decision. My wife and I also sent them on two cruises before they died. One to the Caribbean and one to Alaska. Now I'm glad we did that.

I have often thought of the waste practiced in my family. It seems almost everything we did, all the things we worked at—my parents and sister were by no means lazy but seem to me in retrospect almost eerily diligent—didn't count. My sister's all-state blue ribbon for back-twirl double-baton toss, my mother's county-fair prizes for relish six years running, my dad's fox-trot, famous two counties wide, and his heroism when he got the Felchner girl up out of the well—What did they do for us? I was no better. Up until the year I lost my virginity, I'd spent all my time wasting. I

can dance too. My sister made practice, gliding in stocking feet on the living room and kitchen floor. But it wasn't mostly that. While she was locked in the house's one bedroom becoming the pretty daughter my parents liked to ooh and aah over, blonde hair bratted up with ribbons or complicated braids or barrettes or weaves or with feathers in it—whatever—and sailing out to her car, practically twirling, I was in my room making charts for pool or at Rite Color Bar shooting. For five and a half years I wanted nothing more than to be beautiful over that felt, to score clean good shots, and to beat anyone I ever found. Before that I had spent years in my room studying magic given performances, first at my sweet-sixteen party then at my parents' canasta games and anniversaries. At twelve, so many people let me for their kids' birthdays, I had my own calendar. I passed cards: CHARLIE WALTERS, AMERICAN ILLUSIONIST, 244 MAPLE STREET BETWEEN CHESTNUT AND DEWEY, FLINT, KANSAS. RECEIVING PHONES CALLS BETWEEN 7:30 AND 9:00. o'clock was supper and my father didn't allow calls during dinner. The time I was thirteen I was off nights and onto pool. Magic was all truth and not true—sleight of hand, deception. People willingly gave you their belief, like a coin on an open palm.

*Mona Simpson is the author of the novel Anywhere but Here, published in paperback by Vintage.*



I changed. Fast. As  
ls and family watched, I  
ne a worrier, something I'd nev-  
er. And a studier. And a loner.  
t they didn't know is I'd become  
er and a lover who had to keep a  
t for somebody else. (That first  
, she'd asked, "Can a seventeen-  
old keep a secret?" It had seemed  
a trick question. "No," I said  
y. "I mean, why should a seven-  
year-old have to keep a secret?" I  
couldn't believe she was twenty-

But after, I'd still have to stumble in and find my parents mid-canasta with the Dweebles, people I'd known since I was yea-high, as Hank Dweeble reminded me with a hand to my knee every time I saw him. The ceilings felt low. The kitchen's black-and-white linoleum like a checker-

That night I crawled out my second-story window and down the back porch. I ran, hands in my jacket pockets, over the plan—

STORY 63

and was surprised she minded. She sucked her lip. I didn't understand.

"Trust me on this one." I tapped her nose.

She was a typical twenty-six-year-old girl, worried about marriage, biting her nails. She worried too much. Sometimes she thought her nails were why she wasn't married. The great thing about her was she could tell me all this. I was seventeen. I didn't count. By the end, we decided I would go to my prom but that we would have our own special night the night after, a Sunday. She would make Chinese food from a new book she'd ordered, approximating with vegetables from around here, and we'd listen to a whole Dvořák symphony broadcast from Chicago.

This made Sally's life. After I asked her, she ruffled like a bird from the fanny up. She turned into a different presence in the hallway. And I was beginning to notice that, young and silly as she was, and undeserving, Sally really had a beautiful face. The night of the prom she held no grudges. She didn't humble after I'd ignored her all that year. She watched her own leg hop competently in a dance, lifting her skirt like a pro and wearing only studied expressions. We had a great time dancing. She was four inches taller than me and a wonderful dancer, getting warm and full-cheeked and sweaty like a boy, before retiring outside to the deck. We stayed on the dance floor, or near it, until the end, after the couples who were really couples left for the woods or for grandfather's cabins fifty miles away or for sailboats on the lake or, for the very daring, hotel rooms on Route 9 or, at worst, for cars. Jody and I had made love the first time in a car. Her car, which she owned, not my father's. Her car was a Volkswagen, which she'd slipcovered inside with tartan flannel. We were both small. The backseat had an almost oval window. I remember that window, the exact curve of its corners and the patch of stars.

Somebody else asked Sally for one last dance and she accepted the challenge with vigor, skidding up to me in a step at the end, holding her skirts again. She had pretty ankles and she knew it. I didn't know what to say as

we left. I took her coat off the standing rack—there were only two others left—and set it on her shoulders. I opened her car door. "Would you like to go anywhere?" I asked.

"Like where?"

"I don't know. I thought maybe you were hungry."

She snorted. Girls like that could never say anything bad to you, they just breathed it. "No place is gonna be open," she said, the way she might have said, "The baby's dead, it couldn't get air when you stifled it."

"Yeah, you're right," I said. "Probably no place is."

I took her home. When I parked in front of her house, all dark, I could make out the familiar arch-shaped bay window. I paused a second before jumping out and getting her door.

"Are you having an affair with Miss Gregory?" Sally McCulsky had probably never said anything that direct in her life. And though I'd promised on everything I loved I'd never tell anyone and I'd meant to keep that promise, I told Sally, because she asked.

"Yeah. But it's not what you think."

And the way she nodded, with expected bitterness, I believed she would never tell anybody either. I walked her to the door. She opened it—it was unlocked—and slipped in without saying another word.

That was all many years ago. With Miss Gregory's help I abandoned my pool cue (it waited in its fitted case in my closet, the notched, polished wood precious as a violin—my sister Barbie and her fiancé Buddy had given me the cue for Christmas) and as many senior activities as my family life could bear. We raised my SAT scores 100 points. With those hundred and my essay, written mostly by her, I got in, with full scholarship, to every school I applied to. That was only six. It turned out to cost money just to apply.

I went to Harvard first, then to Yale. Now I'm tenured at Princeton. The only irregularity in my résumé is Kansas and even that seldom brings up more than one amused question. My sister is married, to a refrigeration-installation manager, and lives in

Tulsa. Buddy Martin—whom I called Buddy-Buddy—still lives in Flint, works at the pizza joint, owns a Harley-Davidson. He never married anybody else. That motorcycle is like a book he's writing all his life, you know, he's always buying parts for it and fixing it. He came to Barbie's wedding late and with a hazy gauged hand—he'd cracked up his bike the night before. I didn't have a date for the wedding either—I wouldn't come and I didn't ask anybody else. That night I stood in front of Barbie's empty closet. She had three letterman jackets behind the door. When she broke the engagement with Buddy-Buddy, Hank Dweeble said, "Barbie, I'm a lawyer and I'll divorce all day long coming in out of my office. Let me give you some advice. Marry a John or a Joe or a Dave. I've never divorced a Joe."

These Harolds and Joes and Jansons and Jasons who walk."

Barbie married a Dave. She has two children (George and Jason) who look twenty years older than she does to me anyway, and seems more or less happy I suppose. My parents are both dead, my father dying inside the year of my mother's passing. Most of the others from that time, I've lost touch with. Sally McCulsky, for example, though I know pretty much what has happened to her. She's still married, has children, probably works by now as the kids must likely be in school. She had the kind of midwestern face I've come to recognize on campus, a small-nosed, freckled face with most feral set of features. It falls in line, looks too thin and Appalachian before forty. My wife taught me how to tell who would last. "You will," she told me early on. But she

hope so.

I hoped so on the train to New York City when a woman wearing a headband and a fur collar walked into my car. I felt myself frowning at loosening my tie. I have small hands, dumb hands, and if I don't catch the train before it's too late, they flutter. I tap, I doodle and fidget. I turn out to be a short man, not terribly thin. The woman advancing down the train's aisle seemed unusual



e, unlike the beautiful women I'd  
in my life, she was small, shorter  
I am. She seemed almost a min-  
e. I'd always considered beautiful  
en tall and inaccessible. Once in  
ile you spotted one in academics,  
ng in Romance languages. Never  
mathematics.

he fur lady collapsed into the seat  
ng me.

he was a woman all right, not a  
I remembered a time in my life  
n I saw women from a certain an-  
a view into a room with the door  
n only a wedge. Women were  
ge and tall then, moving liquidly  
ips, bending over beds, reaching  
gs in boxes down from closets.  
y left a scent and a rustle as they  
ready, lifting bracelets off of mir-  
d dressers, pulling silk stockings  
o their garters. They were perpet-  
y in a state of getting ready. They  
e furs and lipstick, their hair nests  
order and complication. At that  
e, before fancy shampoos could be  
ght from every supermarket and  
nd bathrooms became common  
ouses, women's long hair had a  
l. It was gamey and strong, deep  
a fine pelt. They dressed in layers  
lving secrets and machinery, gir-  
and the satin froth of lace on slips  
bras. My mother was like that,  
arm carried the scent of baked ap-  
her fur cuff brushing my cheek in  
snow. When I was a boy, watch-  
ny mother, I wondered if I would  
grow up to marry such a woman. I  
ded I would have to become very

at I hadn't. And I hadn't married  
a woman. I looked at this strang-  
nd laughed. She looked down at  
fingers. She probably thought I  
laughing at her. I was actually  
king something I'd thought a lot  
mes before; of the wasted pretti-  
of my sister and Sally and so  
y girls I knew in Kansas: It  
ied, it served locally, it was mar-  
swollen to pregnancy, and soon  
ed—in short haircuts, perms,  
ser skin, and a life of nervous make-  
nd hurrying to Sunday morning  
ch on time. What would have  
ened if one of them had come  
? Anything could have hap-  
ed. They could have become  
ie stars or models or at least mar-

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ried millionaires or been career girls, smoking and running news sections at glossy magazines.

I left before they grew up. And where I went, college, I grew and the girls grew too but they were still—girls. I married one, at the university chapel. I married Miss Gregory. We did it when I was twenty-one and she twenty-nine. We wanted to be in the same decade. I'd tried to get away for a while; at Harvard I'd fallen for a Vietnamese cellist, but there was no getting away. The thought of Jody alone, sad for me, especially the way she looked after a bad haircut in a certain pair of sunglasses, I was overwhelmed with such pity. . . . I married her. She had long hair, curly from braids, clothes obvious and functional as my own. She stood two and a half inches shorter than me and she kept beautiful posture. She wore navy blue knee socks under her jeans. I know my wife's clothes intimately. I've done both our laundry for years now. In fact, she's apt to wear my underwear and socks. (All those years while I studied, we were able to live a certain kind of life. We rented apartments with fireplaces and Jody painted them white and bought rush mats. We owned a stereo and good recordings and had a nice dinner every night, at a table, with cloth napkins. She learned how to make pasta, she baked. She tried out exotic recipes, once blow-drying a Peking duck in our New Haven basement.) Jody feels in her element here at Princeton. She's gone back to school now herself, getting a Ph.D. I've never seen her so happy since the very beginning when she was planning all this education for me. It turns out, all along, it wasn't some secret knowledge she'd had. She'd wanted all this for herself, it was a wish and she'd made it up as well as she could while we were going along.

"You're married?" was the first thing the fur woman on the train said to me. She tapped her own wedding finger, where there was no ring. Her hands were less done up than the rest of her. Her nails looked short and her fingers kind of blunt. My wife has beautiful hands.

"Yes, unfortunately, I am."

Her head shifted, alert to what,

though? My Kansas accent? Irony? My voice fell low with a merriness in it. "Why? Would you like to propose?"

She smiled largely now. I knew how to work women like this. I had a few in my classes every year. Her lipstick was pink, and with her mouth open, I saw gums.

"Not to you. You're already married." She sighed, and with that moved her whole body in the seat. She pulled her knees up to her chest. She was wearing some sort of pants that fit very closely. I could see everything, as my mother would have said, that there was to see. "One part I don't like about being a woman is not getting to propose. Maybe I will anyway. Maybe I'll propose to my husband."

"And not to me? I proposed to several women, not only my wife. Tell me your name and I'll consider it."

"Martha."

Her name was Martha. My mother's name was Martha. That fact struck me like something physical in the world.

"What's yours?"

"I'm sorry?"

"Your name."

"Oh, Charlie Walters." I stretched out my arm over the aisle between us, but just then the train lurched.

"Mr. Walters. Does your wife know about these proposals?"

"No. I mean, she knows about the one to her." I proposed to the cellist in Boston. It was kind of a joke, I mean it was hardly serious. But it is true that no one ever knew.

"Oh." Her eyebrows changed. I imagined I saw wariness. "How many times?"

"But we've only just met, Miss what-is-it?"

She didn't answer me, she turned away, faced the window.

I thought of my parents' soufflé story that my sister and I had heard all our childhood. He'd taken her to some restaurant and the cook had baked a ring in the soufflé. That's what this woman wanted to hear. "Only once before," I said. "Okay? And now I've been married eleven years. I'm an old married person."

"You don't look old enough to be married eleven years."

"Good. I'm not." I don't have illusions about being handsome, but I want to look young.

This Martha asked me questions about my wife. She probably wanted to get married herself. You could tell.

"Do you rub her head and give advice?" she asked.

"Mmmhmm. I feel like a psychiatrist."

She nodded happily, as if that was what she'd wanted to hear.

"So that's why you want to get married. The head rubs."

She shrugged. "What else?"

She asked me what I did.

"Do?"

"For a living, I meant."

I told her I was a college professor. I stuttered over that quickly. It seemed like the kind of woman who shared my father's views. She probably looked for income in a man and knew where I stood there. I told her that I was on leave for the year at the Institute for Advanced Studies. Einstein had been there. She probably didn't know that but just my knowledge of it made me feel better.

"What do you do there?"

"Oh, nothing. I try to do nothing at all."

She persisted, though. She seemed so sincere. I wasn't used to that. It seemed a trait peculiar to the young. She didn't seem to get irony. But it wasn't that. She was quick. I could see that in her face. She just didn't like it. She seemed to brush my face away, the way my mother collected crumbs from the table and rubbed her other palm.

**I**n Kansas, a hundred years ago, one measure, a four-hour flight in two connections and an old highway by another, both my parents are dead and in the ground. By the time the train stopped at Newark, I'd already told this woman, this Martha-on-the-train, about the light odd quality of being an orphan. I'd once spent Christmas with a girlfriend (the cellist, also, incredibly, an orphan) painting oranges on the steps of the Judd Paume. But I'd been running away. Martha got quite a bit out of me in earnest, persistent questions made me tell her what I hadn't told anyone. Not that they were secrets. I just don't



that way.  
 or my part, I learned some pretty  
 iring things. She was a model,  
 twenty-six, not cover girl or run-  
 "Too short," she said levelly,  
 out a hint of wistfulness. She  
 muted to New Jersey where she  
 eled for a swimsuit mail-order  
 logue. She told me the money was  
 l. Then, when I thought she'd  
 what she was going to say, she  
 ed out, "I was having an affair  
 the owner. He was supporting  
 But now that's over, and this is  
 ast season. I need the money to go  
 to school."  
 College?" I asked, I hope deli-  
 ly. In my life, I don't really meet  
 one who doesn't expect a fine edu-  
 on. This Martha-on-the-train was  
 ously bright, but then she was a  
 el. I didn't want to insult her.  
 nted to ask other things too. I  
 ed to know how old the man was,  
 many there had been. It was like  
 d expect from how she looked.  
 wife would have smirked.  
 went to three years of Bible col-  
 And quit that a long time ago. I  
 t to start over, at NYU. I have  
 ost enough money saved. I'll go  
 fall."  
 student, my most interesting  
 years back, had posed for *Playboy*  
 freshman summer. They did a fall  
 on Ivy League coeds. Vanessa  
 her name.  
 artha turned her head to the  
 low so her profile was set against  
 old green velvet of the seat. From  
 front she looked cute, even all-  
 ican, with the childish sprinkle  
 eckles across her nose. But from  
 side there was classic beauty,  
 its hint of cruelty. Her lips  
 sed out, full and creased, her  
 kbones struck high and harsh.  
 e hushed because the train was  
 ering into Pennsylvania Station.  
 ng up to New York always lifted  
 then stalled my breath, some at  
 op of my lungs. I was supposed to  
 ver the first in a series of lectures  
 e Public Library. She was going  
 e, I guessed.  
 ne put her feet up on my seat.  
 ankles, encased in patterned black  
 kings, were small but well shaped.  
 wore suede pumps, a kind of shoe  
 has always existed, shoes my

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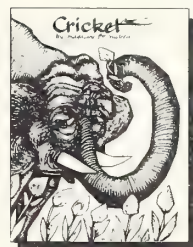
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mother had worn, that young girls now apparently bought, shoes my wife would never own. My wife had square-toed suede sandals imported from Germany, known for their comfort. She would never wear fur. It looked old-fashioned and glamorous to me. My sister had subscribed to the *Barbie Doll Monthly* when she was a child, and under the canopy of her bed we read about people having their portraits painted and men lifting dotted fur stoles off women's shoulders.

My fingers flickered near the outer bone of Martha's ankle. I understood that if I took my hand away the touch would seem accidental, unfelt by me, caused by the rocking and slight lurch of the train. But I left my hand there on her ankle, looking around the train, as if bored. I ever so slightly moved my fingertips on her heel. Wow.

**W**eird greenish lights came on when the train stopped in the tunnel and there was noise over a loudspeaker and all kinds of people rushed, grabbing their briefcases from the overhead metal rack, and she just sat there a moment, doing nothing. Then she yawned and smiled up at me. Her chin was pointy and narrow. Was her physiognomy what made her smile give such an impression of wisdom? She was a woman in whom even laughter held a trace of faint sadness.

My briefcase, a gift from my mother-in-law, knocked against my thigh as we walked.

"Are you going home?" You had to almost shout in those tunnels.

"No. I wish. Going out." I followed her to a turnstile that led to the subway.

"Where are you from?"

Her face turned uncertain.

"Like originally, I mean."

"Nebraska."

"Oh."

She smiled a good-bye. I wanted to do more, maybe ask for her phone number, but all I did was yell, "Hey?"

She turned.

"You take that train a lot, the 3:50?"

"Wednesdays," she said.

The next week I sat in the same place in the last car, and she came on again at Metuchen. It was easy to talk

because she knew so much about me. She seemed like an old friend. She put her feet up on my armrest. This time she was wearing what looked like really fashionable boots. Somewhere before Newark she unzipped them and took her legs out. "Mmmhmm," she said. When I grew up in the Midwest, those pretty, energetic girls must have had all those sighs and relapses, but we couldn't see them. They hid them from us. The one thing that might have let me love them.

I attended every game my sister performed in, throwing the baton, her legs strict in short white boots. She was better than the other majorettes—her movements had more precision and angularity, her throws more abandon, more risk. That was the thing about our family: I grew up thinking my mom was better than other mothers, my dad taller and more good than other dads, even Flint seemed superior and cosmopolitan compared with Salina and Hectorsville. Jody Gregory had to teach me that whole other scales existed on which our virtues wouldn't show.

My sister practiced in our small front yard every morning before breakfast. I woke up to the streak of white appearing in my second-story window and the clomp of her catch glove. I'd go downstairs, she'd be nimbly walking to the front porch, bending over to bring in the paper and the cold, beaded bottles of milk and cream. It was seven o'clock. My mother, in an apron, would be lifting muffins out of the oven. You never saw them weak.

"Tired?"

"Yeah, but I shouldn't be," Martha said. "I sleep too much." Under the boots, Martha had on tight black slacks with stirrups and, inside those, knitted cream-colored socks. She seemed as neat and pretty underneath as what showed. I imagined that as she undressed there would be no disappointments, ever, no shock of cold dry feet, no scars, no signs of age, decay, of messiness. . . Her feet fell on my lap and I began rubbing them, moving up her calf to the knee. The bones of her legs were simple. She had big knees, like ball bearings.

"I like your boots," I said.

"Oh, thanks. They're riding boots. They were really cheap. I got them at one of those stores—You know them—In the East Thirties?" She was always offering prices, directions, and advice. She didn't solve her own mystery at all.

**I**t began to get dark early. By December, she sat next to me on the train, across, and we rode from Elizabeth to Manhattan in the dark, her facing the window, me behind rubbing her shoulders and her neck, her forehead, her arms and hands, her lower legs. We stopped talking. It seemed right. I mean, I knew it wasn't right, but even when I'd been twenty-one and a brown suit at the ecumenical church altar with strangers for witnesses taking my vows, I knew I'd have to take it up sometime, being young. And this was another one from the Midwest, the way I might have been if I hadn't met Jody. It was still innocent.

One evening, her facing the window, me feeling all of her back against my front, I whispered, "This reminds me of Madame Bovary and Rodolphe's fur coat," but she shook her head. "I hadn't read the book," she said. "It doesn't matter," I said.

**T**he next Wednesday she pressed on lipstick while the train moved evenly toward Manhattan. She shifted forward on the tattered seat, her back arched, giving her tiny rump a childlike pertness. She took a small mirror from her bag, holding it in one hand in front of her. The other carefully outlined her lips with a pencil. Telephone poles and green trees turned like spokes outside, and she watched them and her. She held the little makeup bag tightly between her knees. I saw inside the open zipper the solid-colored round jars and the tops looked like billiard balls and the coins and cards and scarves inside the magic prop bag. Smokestacks appeared and clouds etched the air with the permanence of cold. We were crossing industrial New Jersey. So the yellow windows of brick factories coaxed us to imagine life inside. Night seemed to be coming fast from the little houses.

When we stepped from the subway into the air, lights would be visible



hhattan, suspended like magic  
ins in the sky. I would walk to the  
ary, she would go I didn't know  
ere. I wanted to touch her, lay a  
id on her shoulder. I'd touched her  
weeks now, a light curl down her  
ne with the back of my fingers  
ld be okay. But I didn't, not be-  
se I worried about permission, but  
ause she was concentrating.  
she painted on lipstick with a  
sh. This was her work. There was  
intentness to her, a diligence I  
ognized that equaled my own. I'd  
n this way with pool and magic  
. More than in my wife's disserta-  
n, her pleasure in the every-other-  
ay discussion group, I believed in  
rtha's will. She was stubborn, with  
ugh resolve to make something of  
self. My wife had had that once  
she used it all to make something  
ne. I decided I'd buy a *Vogue* for  
t Wednesday, and we'd sit on the  
n and turn the pages slowly and  
rtha would teach me things. I even  
ated to learn about the chemical  
s of makeup, all of it, and when  
told me details, I remembered the  
es with no effort.  
All the glass skyscrapers suspended  
threads and wishes, calculation,  
the honors in the world, nights  
ocktail parties, toasts in foreign  
es, arms reaching out to find my  
ad, dinners with older, accom-  
hed men who knew my name.  
ne of that mattered next to this—  
effort and her little pride, her will  
that the world not disappoint it.  
y had once asked me if I'd give my  
for her and I'd said I would. We  
e lying on a couch in Yale's mar-  
student housing, watching televi-  
i, a bowl of popcorn between us,  
foot, safe in a patterned navy blue  
e sock, near my face. I grabbed the  
t. She'd bought me a word pros-  
sor to write my dissertation. She  
ked full-time on campus so we  
ld afford a regular married life. It  
seemed to me then petulant, a  
s question. But here, now, on the  
n, there was something so tough in  
slump of this small woman's back,  
nowledge that she was on her own,  
t ready to die in her aid.  
wanted to bend metal, I craved  
physical strength. I fumbled in  
pockets and found a quarter. I

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## Israel and Human Rights

### How does Israel behave in the face of Arab uprising?

The so-called "intifada," the uprising of the Arab population in the territories administered by Israel has been going on for more than a year. In that time, over 350 Arabs, mostly young people, have been killed and many have been wounded. The U.S. State Department, in its Report on Human Rights, has been critical of some aspects of Israel's human rights posture.

#### What are the facts?

■ Israel is a society based on law. Every measure taken by civilian or military authorities is scrutinized by the country's legal authorities. In dealing with the "intifada," Israel is faced with a difficult problem—the uprising of a civilian population. This is a problem very similar to that faced by the British in Northern Ireland, by the Filipinos in its southern islands and the Spanish in the Basque provinces. Responsible government has the obligation to maintain order and to preserve law and to do so with as little loss of life and with as little injury to the civilian population as possible.

■ Israel has done just that. The loss of over 350 Arab lives is of course a tragedy—every human life is precious. But seen in context, the number of casualties is really very small and a reflection on the care and restraint of the Israeli military. Israeli soldiers are confronted daily with violent riots—massive stoning and fire bombing of persons and moving vehicles, attacks with iron bars, chains, knives, Molotov cocktails and other lethal weapons. Such violence is meant to kill. Israeli soldiers and civilians have lost their lives. Almost 1300 Israelis have been injured, some of them critically.

■ The task of the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) is made more difficult by the tactics of the Arabs in having their able-bodied adult men stay behind and having their children and their women confront the IDF. It is a no-win situation for the Israelis. They try to avoid death and injury at all cost. But death and injury are sometimes unavoidable in riot situations. Since Israel is an open society, reporters and television crews from all around the world have access to the happen-

ings, quite a few of which are staged for their benefit. Obviously it is a public relations disaster for the Israelis to have the world see their troops confronting women and children. Those women and children, however, wish to inflict as much damage as they possibly can. They mean to kill.

■ The IDF, one of the finest armies in the world, is trained to defend the country's borders, and not for riot control. Therefore, almost inevitably, errors were made in the initial phases of the uprising. But from the very beginning, detailed instructions were given to the troops on how to react to any given provocation. The orders under which Israeli military personnel operate are specific and well known to every soldier. Those who break the rules are subject to military trial and punishment. The principles of restraint and gradual response are applied. Tear gas is used to control riots. Live bullets are fired only in life-threatening situations. But to some, every means of riot control used by the Israelis, including police batons or rubber or plastic bullets is objectionable.

■ Those residents of the territories who are suspected to have committed serious security offenses are dealt with in full accordance with international law and the humanitarian provisions of the Geneva Conventions. All residents have full access to the Israeli legal system—even to the Israeli Supreme Court. Prisons are unhappy places in every society. But Israeli prisons and detentions centers in which those arrested for security offenses are held, are fully comparable to and adhere to the standards of those in other advanced Western democracies. Certainly, not even the most rebellious Arab detainee in Israel would prefer to serve time in a Syrian, Jordanian, Iraqi or Saudi prison instead.

Within the context of massive human rights abuses throughout the Arab world, the focus on Israel seems to be entirely out of perspective. Other countries in the Middle East lack the most basic elements of human rights—freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free elections, equality for women, freedom of religion, freedom of association. Opponents, instead of facing television cameras, face execution. Those countries do not have to defend themselves against foes who are single-mindedly intent on their destruction. Yet, those nations do not draw the enormous degree of attention that Israel receives. Israel adheres to the highest moral and legal principles. It does so, surrounded though it is by implacable enemies, and consistent with its own security requirements and with its obligation to the international community to maintain law and order in the territories it administers.

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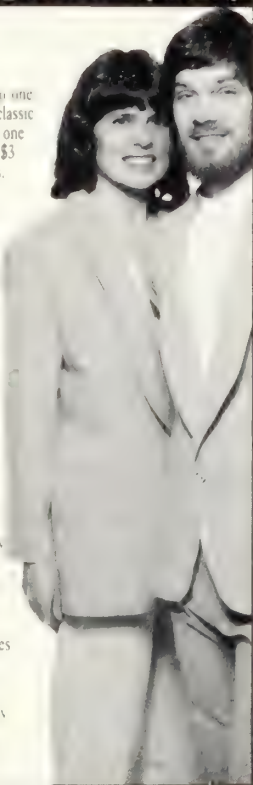
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could palm the coin, trick it in her ear. All I could make was an illusion. "The Art of Legitimate Deception"—a chapter in one of my first magic books. But I felt a surge of resolution I remembered from my youth—to make the world kind for her. I feared for her. I thought of my sister and Sally—maybe it was a good thing they'd stayed. They were safe there. They weren't the girlfriends of swimsuit-factory owners who paid for them and left. I wanted to touch Martha's shoulder and stop her from leaving the train.

She now slid something shiny like a coat of water over her colored lips. Then, and this surprised me, she extracted a five-inch brush from her bag—her thighs trembled holding it—and dusted a white powder over her mouth.

"What're you doing?"

She was glad to tell me. "Cornstarch," she said. "It holds everything and mattes it a little so it doesn't shine. See." I would have given anything then to watch her at home before her own mirror, rising on the balls of her feet, stepping back, licking her finger and wiping the corner of her eye—just like that, frankly, with confidence. You fall in love with people that way—watching them busy, faces rapt and closed with absorption. Jody stared at me that first night shooting pool. I imagined Martha's face bare, a way I'd never seen it: young and freckled, smooth and moving as a body. She would wear her hair tied up and set about her work matter-of-factly, as if she were mopping the floor, doing it very well.

Then she began to show me a new way to make up her eyes. I thought of Jody. I should take notes and learn so I could show Jody how. I was really married. It went deep. That was a dumb thought though because Jody hated makeup. She would say something insulting. She talked about makeup and high heels in the same breath as foot binding. She felt an aversion to anything fancy, artificial, made-up. Her taste favored the natural. She always looked great in Levis. I had a vision of her hair swaying down her back, her hard heels hitting the floor as she walked away. I must have winced. It was a bitter taste, my wife's

certainty. She would never dare. She wouldn't even dance with me at weddings.

Martha saw my mouth turn. "I don't think I'm a silly woman. And I'm not smart like you are. I'm not."

I looked out to the window. Darkness had settled in the spaces around the factories which now gleamed white and liquid as the Taj Mahal. The noise of the train came back to me. I watched it happen a minute before I moved, her eyes filling with stable water. It always ended in tears. Every time I seemed to blunder to some small, dumb way to hurt her.

"Don't." I dabbed my cuff at the corner of her eye. I didn't want her to ruin the makeup, undo all she'd so worked so hard on.

"Look." I unzipped her makeup bag. It was full of red and blue and low pots with gold and silver lids. I took the longest brush and twirled it in figure eights, fast, like a baton. She rallied, sniffling. I palmed a glass pencil, gold for the eyes, and picked it out of my briefcase. That worked. She was laughing, but then she said "Ouch. Ow." I couldn't tell for a minute that she wasn't still laughing.

"I bit the inside of my mouth and it's bleeding."

"Oh Martha."

Jody went to see her mother in March. I visited Martha. I rode to New York on a Thursday afternoon and found her address in the phone book. M. Hinkle. And now I was there, standing by a bank of buzzers. My hands sweat and I rubbed them against the corduroy of my slacks. Two people walked into the building carrying bags of groceries. Both of them were dressed all in black. I was on blue pants and a pastel shirt and green sweater. I felt too colored. And suddenly, I'd imagined being here and now I felt a terror.

"Who is it?" she called from through the intercom.

"It's Charlie. Charlie from the train."

I understood her pause. "Charlie. What are you doing here."

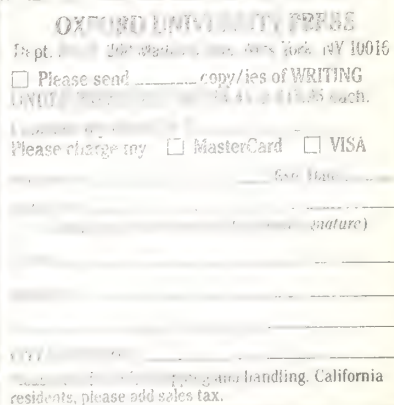
"I don't really know," I said in manners coming back to me. "I'd catch you at a bad time. I can just go."

"Come on up," she said, and then



he banged a kettle on the stove. When she was pouring coffee straight through a filter over the cups, I sat at her end of the table, it wobbled, my hands tensed and folded on the top. "You have to understand about me," she said, "I'm according to certain rules." She stirred down my coffee. "I'm a reli-

Martha went into her bedroom and left me alone to contemplate "mousse." I did look really different. I'd seen men on TV, on the street, even walking the halls of the institute with their hair sticking up like this. Did they all use mousse? Come to think of it, this was probably the first



ion now. It had to be. I thought, maybe I could have been handsome after all. That was an arena I'd given up long ago. It wasn't Jody who'd stopped me. It was me. My laziness. Math. But perhaps I could have joined the circus after all. I could have gotten the tattoo I'd thought about and gone on the pool circuit. I'd thought about an overturned magician's hat.

She came back then, holding two garments on hangers. She tapped them against her lap. "What do you think?"

They were a man's white shirt and a gray sweater. "For me?"

She took me to the Saigon Restaurant. Sitting across a table, I finally said, "May I ask whose clothes I'm wearing? An old boyfriend's?" I kept thinking of the guy who owned the swimsuit factory.

"My father's," she said. "I wear the shirt. The sweater... the sweater I just have."

She had told me the unkind ways people had treated her because she was a model, and wasn't I now doing just that same thing? Yeah. When she'd found her apartment, the woman had not wanted to rent to a model. But Martha touched my wrist and I forgot the slight shame.

Martha asked the waitress to bring her own favorite dishes, except without meat or chicken. And the waitress did us well. Everything tasted unrecognizable and delicious. Martha asked me to pass her things and felt no shyness eating a lot. As we talked, her hands worked the table, lifting bowls from under my sleeve, moving glasses to avert my elbows, cutting me a piece of her fish and putting it on my plate. She took bites from my chopsticks.

"Look," she said, and her mouth flickered. She touched her own neck and then pointed her glance at the waitress. I noticed: odd bruises on the waitress's neck. When she came back, I saw more, inside her elbow, the top of one arm.

"You think?"

"There's no other way you could get bruised there. That's not from falling. Careful. Don't stare."

The waitress appeared again with our bill. As we walked back, Martha told me she'd once had a shiner, from her boyfriend the swimsuit-factory

owner. "People were always staring at me and trying not to. I'd just look up and say, 'My boyfriend popped me.'"

Martha showed me the paper she was writing. "You're a professor," she said. She had a small, neat desk, painted white over layers of chips and scratches, with a pretty manual typewriter she said she'd bought in New Orleans. She was writing her admissions essay for NYU. She wrote about tending an inner life while being a model in New York City. I hadn't worked on a typewriter, much less a manual, for years now, but in an hour, I found myself limber. I rolled up the sleeves of her father's shirt. We stayed up until two, writing a paragraph, reading it aloud, adding, retyping, finding transitions, discarding a word, changing an image. Finally, we both thought it sounded finished. I thought it was really good. She'd get in. That's for sure.

She gave me her bed. She took sheets and blankets to the living-room couch for herself. She undressed in the dark. I could half see her slipping on a large T-shirt, the thin gold chain around her neck caught on the collar. Her bed was a futon, straw-smelling, on the floor. I felt oddly safe in it. The apartment seemed smaller in the dark. I heard her mumbling and wondered if she was already talking in her sleep.

"What are you doing?" I put my palm flat on the wood floor beside the futon and it oriented me. It was cold and I knew I could sleep.

Finally she answered, but it was a strange voice. "Did you have a good time tonight?"

"Martha, I had a wonderful time tonight."

"Then why don't you thank God for it."

My head sunk back on the pillow. The cool deep craving for sleep left and I got out of bed. I watched her from across the room. She was kneeling. Her T-shirt was white, and her hair fell in a loose braid between her shoulders, veering to the left.

"How do you pray?"

"I just try."

"Every night?"

"Other times, too. When I work.

On a shoot, with all the lights, I try to darken out everything and not even listen to what they're telling me, if it works. I imagine I have a desk on the floor surrounded by hundreds of other people at other desks. But I'm careful and my desk is clear. Sometimes they have to tap me on the shoulder when it's over. Once, when I got distracted and couldn't concentrate, the photographer said, do whatever you were doing before. Your face was right. But I couldn't."

"Do you ask for things?"

She waited so long I didn't think she'd answer. "No, I don't ask for things."

I woke up in the night and went to stand by her. The blankets and sheets were kicked back, one knee bent up to touch an elbow, she was an awkward sleeper. The pendant of her chain lay in her mouth.

She was wearing underwear, pajamas, underwear, elasticized at the hip, the kind Jody wore and I'd washed, for my own, every week in the laundry. While she was kneeling before, I felt I could have toppled her. I could imagine lying over her back and both of us breathing together.

She mumbled something now to her sleep. "Say my name," I thought I heard her say.

The thought of her lying on her stomach on dark fur flitted through me, her knees bent and pressed against thighs hard, pushed out like a frog. Her crotch tilted and I would feel her suddenly. She'd arch up, I'd feel her belly with one hand from behind. I'd try to turn her around, but she wouldn't face me. Her body moved faster and faster, bucking against me. Then, it turned bad. I couldn't stop. She was still underneath with her back to me, her face into the cushion of the sofa, and I felt her sobbing. Hair covered her face. I reached for a hook some behind her ear and looked at her. I was not surprised that she would cry, but her sobs seemed desolately profound. Her back and shoulders convulsed and it went on longer than it seemed it should have. Her breath seemed voices from a ventriloquist far away, abstract, unanswerable.

I looked down at her, sleeping purely, her face bunched. I returned



ts, I m cold futon. My grandfather had  
n't e farm in North Dakota, and when  
g me, a child we'd go there in the fall  
desk ny sister and I slept in the attic.  
s at co always slept easily, anywhere,  
I'm c'd lie under the slanted eaves, lis-  
times g to her breathe. This was like  
der w I'd never seen the chain around  
distrac na's neck before; if she wore it  
the p day it was concealed beneath  
u w her clothes. I felt totally  
e was sure it was a cross.

pt good sleep the way I always  
n that cold attic in the country.  
n I woke, I felt rested. From the  
, I saw books lined up on the  
held on both sides with large  
s. The closet door was open a lit-  
pale pink-and-blue satin dress  
almost to the ground near  
ring pink high heels. Martha  
ready up, banging things around  
kitchen, in her riding boots and  
pants, hair up in a ponytail. The  
fell watery on the table and tiled

e served us each a muffin. She'd  
ently baked them. "Healthy,"  
aid.  
ealthy," I nodded. "Wheat  
"

'heat germ, molasses, bran—all  
She toyed with her chain. It  
Saint Christopher medal. "See,  
you glad we didn't do any-  
?"

know." I kind of did feel glad.  
was washing the dishes, moving  
ly. I could still go home. I hadn't  
anything. Sometimes I'd had  
dreams and it took until noon  
e full sureness of innocence to  
back in me.

rtha told me that Friday was her  
ing to volunteer at a day-care  
r in a hotel and I decided to go  
her. I made up the sheets on the  
and left her father's shirt and  
er folded on top. I wanted to  
hem. I really wanted her to give  
e, but since she didn't, I felt like  
g it. At the door, I looked back  
apartment once.

was a windy March day and we  
d along the river, new green  
of trees open above us, the  
s starkly black and smelling of

is is a hotel?" I whispered. We

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**Waterhills**

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were climbing bare, dirty stairs, we passed doors covered with institutional grating and locks, the people who shuffled by us each seemed to be missing something—one had no socks, another no hair.

"A welfare hotel." The Princess Kelly seemed stripped. Ceilings still held the height of a former life. Up three flights, Martha opened a door and we were in a room full of toys. Kids played at low tables and in a sandbox right there. Martha waved to people and led me to a tiny plastic chair. She installed me and gave me puzzles to work out with the kids at my table. She went to serve other kids their breakfast. I'm not particularly good with kids. I want to be. But I'm a little afraid of them. I'm never sure what to say. These kids crowded around, because I was new I guess, pressing close so I smelled crumbs on their breath. They looked at me as if I was supposed to do something.

"I'm Charlie. What're your names?"

There was a boy named Mohammed, one named Jesus, and girls named Chanel and Tiffany and Dior. I put the puzzles before us on the table and thank goodness they began to play by themselves. Between us we got one done, a puzzle of the United States, missing Indiana. I palmed Nebraska, planted it behind Mohammed's ear. Next came Kansas for Tiffany's sock. She was two octaves of giggle. I was beginning to feel better.

I looked over at Martha. As she picked up a child and set him down in the indoor sandbox, I noticed a chip of lipstick on one of her front teeth. Then, I remembered a gesture of my parents. My father putting a finger to his mouth and moving his lips in a certain way meant my mother had lipstick on her teeth. She would immediately extract a tissue from her purse or he would hand over his hankie and she would repair the damage. She would look up to him in a question and he would nod, yes, got it, and smile. Sometimes it would go on. He'd frown, not yet. And she'd work more, look up. "There?" At worst, he'd come to her with his hankie, wipe it off himself, show it to her, finishing with a kiss.

I saw this maybe a hundred times

during childhood. It was as regular as many homely things that come to me, now, years after my parents are dead and in the ground. Their absence seems almost an abstraction. But that movement of my father's lips, circled with vertical lines, told something different than my mother's firm shake of a pan over the stove, say, something more, that had nothing to do with me. They were truly in love, aside from Barbara and me, in a way I'd never been with any of those pretty, cheerful girls I'd danced with and later petted in the cow pastures and ditches, in a timbre I'd never had with Jody either, a good, decent, intelligent woman all the same. But my parents shared a fluency I knew now with Martha. They were lucky. I smiled to myself in a slight cruelty to Jody; their marriage may have been as unequal as she'd decided it was, but they were happy. Not everything they did and tried for was so beside the point. Their canasta and golf and my father's dog imitations and his fox-trots, my mother's butter-filled cakes and prize relish. All the proof was in that one gesture. It told of their lives in bed, a handing back and forth, fluency.

Jody and I talked about equality, we gossiped about the disrespect other men we knew showed their wives. I'd done dishes, done laundry, in fact, picked up after Jody as long as I'd known her. I did a lot in our marriage. And yet, none of those things had anything to do with real equality. They were arrangements. I felt Martha and I could be partners in the world, that she was the closest person to me. Love now seemed a form of sympathy.

Martha came to stand by me. I took my cuff, wet it with saliva, and said, "Comeer. Open your mouth a second."

Martha told me the city paid \$1,800 a month for families to live in rooms without bathrooms in the Princess Kelly. That was more than double what she paid for her apartment on the thirteenth floor. We shook our heads, bewildered that no one had yet succeeded in changing the Byzantine laws. Why couldn't this money build decent houses for these families, houses with window boxes, cheerful stairways?

We both knew this would happen. One law pulled would unravel other laws. Children would still grow up in dim rooms with bathrooms or kitchens. Neither analysis, Fourier transforms, Heisenberg spaces, or Martha's religion would change that. Other people would live in poverty through our lives, the moments we were happy.

Martha shrugged. "I'm only here once a week."

I ran from the train station, bounded up the front steps, the briefcase banging, opened the door shouting, "I'm home."

But no one was there. Jody had been in the basement office, McCosh, at the word processor. I went to the library or having a fervent conversation over coffee with another older graduate student. I should be pleased by her excitement. She deserved it. The house was dim and still, the furniture upholstered and round, matched in shades of brown. I collapsed on the chair.

Jody is a saver. We dine out and she enjoys the meals, eating a piece on her plate slowly, but she spent little during our early married life. She managed the money she scraped up enough for a down payment on this house. Jody is a good-looking woman. But it was she decided long ago that certain things wouldn't last and that other things didn't matter very much. In a way she's right. On clear cold Saturday mornings I wake up and whether or not she could dance, she would dance with me the night before, a satin gown and gloves, no makeup, pool, magic, or even singing along to pop songs—none of which seem to count. Those mornings I clean the house together, then I run out to the country to a farm near where we come home and make French bread out of fresh bread and new eggs.

But I am a waster. Too many beautiful, ephemeral things take my attention. I shot pool here the other night with a perennial graduate student, an English professor. He tried to get the English professor to beat my knees and to remind me to loosen my grip, let the cue glide on the fast hand. "You, you got your book."



got your Ph.D! I can play pool," said. And he was right. What did magic do for me? Only pleasure. It would Martha's modeling be in years? Like my sister's baton. Jody me from all that.

Martha and I were together, real- together, we'd go out, drink a bottle ine, dance, laugh all the way e in a taxi along the river, and ess the next morning that neither had any money. We'd spend it all ne brilliant night full of lights and s and then we'd get back to work. ould be a different kind of life. ning debts, living that ragged life n you're young—Jody and I t, we saved and waited. Now we afford it but we can't quite make

got my wasting from my family. Christmas, Hank Dweeble gave ather a check for a million dol- "The Big Spender," they'd ned and laughed. Those were the when they drank martinis my er made in silver mixers. Some- I found the check a long time and I kept it in my magic bag. I have it. I used to look at it and der, if I took it to Western ral Savings and Trust and went o the teller behind bars, would it , could I be. . .

hen they first married, my mom dad had had fights about money. nother kept careful accounts, and ms dad had lent their last mort- payment to a friend in dubious . But he could always win her with a lick on the neck or some vagant generosity—a fur stole, s. He'd take her dancing to make r it. She fell for the ephemeral

needed a talk with my father, a down a long soft-dirt country I tried to imagine it: both of us our hands in our pockets, me ly explaining my life away, par- n Boston, a bad fight in a sushi how now I felt honestly in love, way I always should have been, ands willing to do anything, but late. And with a woman my er would have liked. A woman scrubbed her apartment for two

Martha was someone, model all, I could have brought home to as, if there was a home in Kansas

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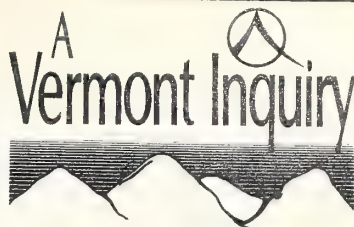
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## SOLUTION TO THE APRIL PUZZLE

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C	R	O	S	S	E	X	A	M	I	N	E
K	O	A	Z	O	O	E	P	L	S	U	A
T	S	N	I	T	C	S	H	E	K	R	S
R	E	C	T	O	K	T	A	D	B	S	S
A	S	S	E	M	T	P	P	Y	R	P	E
C	S	H	N	A	R	O	P	E	N	E	R
K	A	F	I	R	U	M	I	N	O	A	N
E	M	A	G	I	L	E	S	C	O	U	T
M	A	R	M	L	Y	L	E	C	M	C	E
D	R	K	A	Y	H	O	R	H	S	E	D

## NOTES FOR "SINGLE OCCUPANCY"

ACROSS: 1. BEL(L-F)LOWER; 2. LIKE, three meanings; POUR, two meanings; 3. CROS(SEX)AMINE, anagram; 4. ELSA, hidden in reverse & Lit; K-A(reversal)-ZOO; 5. SNI(T)CHERS, anagram; 6. TAB(os)S; RECTO(r); 7. PYRE, hidden in reverse; ASSET, anagram; 8. SHAR(PEN)ER; 9. KAFIR, anagram; M(IN-O)AN; 10. EAGLES-C-OUT; 11. ECCE(ntricity); MAR(L)Y, anagram; 12. DRAY HORSE(c), anagram. DOWN: 13. BACKTRAC(K)ED, anagram; 14. RAM-A-S, reversed; P(R)OSE; 15. LO (ANS) HARK; 16. LISZT, hidden in reverse; ENIGMA(i), anagram; 17. CUSTOMARILY, hidden; 18. F-ROCK; TR(U-L)Y; 19. PO(ME)LO, anagram; LAXEST, anagram; 20. SLAPHAPPY, anagram; 21. YE-C-CH; (c)OILED; 22. W(HIS)K B-ROOMS; 23. KNURS(t), anagram; 24. REASSERTED, anagram (Note: The clue erred in not indicating the past tense).

SOLUTION TO APRIL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 76). WILLIAM ZINSSER: WRITING TO LEARN. Jar- gon... takes a multitude of forms... buzzwords... are words that make the insider feel important... but... don't really mean anything... Recently I signed... "communication facilitation skills development intervention." From... activity that I could visualize.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 71, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by May 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the June issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 75 are Meg Angell, Helena, Montana; Clarice Hunter, Tallahassee, Florida; and Bertha T. Martinez, Palatka, Florida.

and not an abstract memory, made of light.

I could kind of fathom my father's steps and my father's gait and my father's deepening frown. The goofiness went out of him when you talked morality. He wouldn't have known what to do. His life had followed one straight line. I thought of him one time, standing at the foot of the stairs. "I'm as loyal as a dog," he said. His eyes cast over to our beagle, who was asleep, paws in front of him, under the dining-room table. "Eighteen years and I still shine my shoes for your mother. For a date with her."

He stopped just then when my mother stepped to the top of the banister, tall in heels, her neck and clavicle exposed, ears shiny with gold.

He tossed me the car keys. He didn't care anymore. They were getting picked up by the Dweebles. He whistled whee-whew and watched her as she stepped down, saying, "Oh, George." He was dead and in the ground. The wind blew branches and leaves, ticking, over their graves.

I ran to Jody's little study, off our kitchen. She had a word processor set up there, our first one, the one she'd bought me at Yale. Gray notebooks were lined up on a shelf, labeled. In an open box, she had beige stationery with her name and our address, not printed but raised up on the paper. I ran my fingers over it. She had two pens in pen holders mounted on either side of a clock and a brown paisley blotter paper she'd bought in a gift store. In a silver frame was a faded poster of Flint Central's *Anything Goes*.

I'd seen Jody slip into shyness and awe on these campuses the way Flint and magic and pool had sunk to nothing in her first white-walled apartment, ringing with music. Probably everybody is like that. Anyone can look less somewhere else. And Jody was like Martha too. She'd come here, east, with me. She wanted things.

I didn't know if I'd see Martha again. The next Wednesday, two businessmen had our seats in the last car. At her stop, a woman walked in carrying a bird cage covered in dark fabric. Then no one. Then she was

there. When I looked up at her, it was like a rush of wings. It took time for me to slow enough to see her.

Martha stuck out her leg. "Guess what kind of stockings these are?"

They were a strange tone, opaque, yet vaguely shimmery, smooth, reminiscent of actresses' legs in old black-and-white movies.

"They're two. They're just regular Hanes sheer, but two pair, one over the other." She grinned. She still loved revealing her discoveries.

"Ouch," she said as the train lurched. She told me she'd bitten the place she bit the week before, just when it was healing. "It's bleeding. I haven't eaten meat for six years, but blood always tastes good to me."

The cut made Martha's cheeks uneven, the left one swelling, and her shoot was on Saturday morning. I poked around the inside of her mouth with my finger and she nodded when I touched the place. I took out a hankie, dabbed until it came clean. I showed her the spot.

Then I closed her mouth with my hand.

She touched the ring on my finger. "You're still married."

"And you're still not. A lot of good we've done."

Just then the bird began to flap and sing. The woman in the seat across from us must have taken the cover off the cage. And the bird—it was a parrot, yellow and jungle green with a red back—sang a wild half-shriek.

"Ouch. It started again. Bleeding."

I looked in her bag for... something. I hadn't helped. Maybe something of hers would. I took out each item, laying each on the old velvet seat. There were small red-orange pots of cream, blue and green pencils, a dollar, pink and magenta lipsticks in gold cases, purple scallop-shaped compacts, a knotted rosary, a silver contraption for curling eyelashes, a gold can of mousse, and, at the bottom, one big yellow box of Argo cornstarch. The woman on the box was the same she'd been all our childhood: an Indian squaw with hair parted down the middle, blush engraved evenly on each cheek. She wore a headpiece with a feather. Her long gown opened to show her body; a full curved perfect ear of corn.

"Martha? You would have been my wife," I said.

She nodded. I held her chin in my cupped hand, impersonal and impersonal. For a moment, I thought of the people around us; how we must look. I said to myself. It would be impossible to explain. But her chin waved under my palm, it was hurting. I dabbed a little cornstarch onto my finger to press on the cut. She opened her mouth, I looked inside, there was a round dark spot of blood on her gum and everything narrowed to just that.

#### May Index Sources

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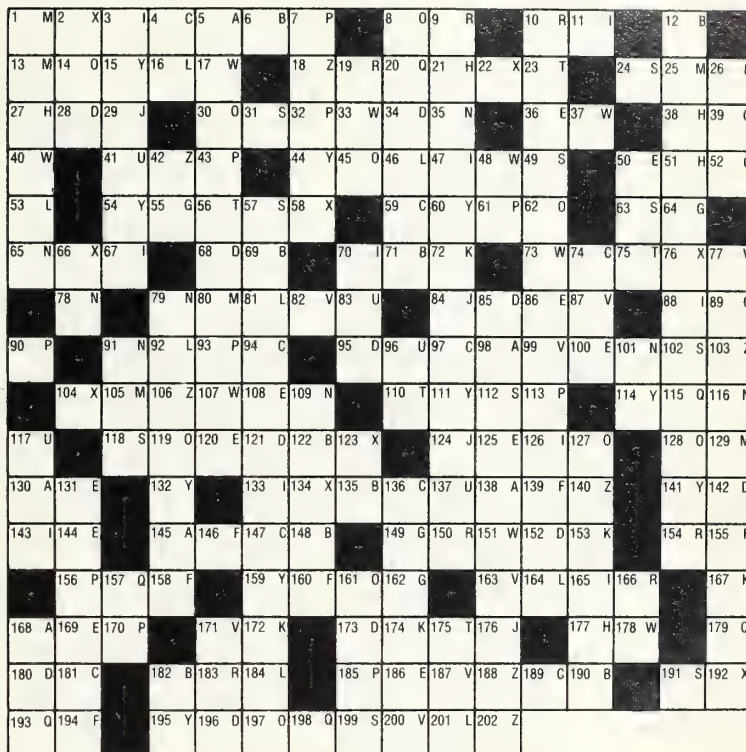


# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 77

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 75.



## CLUES

## WORDS

A. Faith

98 138 130 5 168 145

B. Contention about words

148 182 122 69 135 12 6 71  
190

C. Spelling

74 97 181 59 147 189 4 52  
136 89 94

D. Insalubrious

28 121 173 196 142 34 68 85  
95 180 152

E. 1945 film in which Cary Grant played Cole Porter (3 wds.)

186 120 108 125 50 169 144 100  
36 86 131

F. Excessively affected (hyph.)

139 194 160 158 146 155

G. Central part of a ship

149 55 39 162 64

H. Lift

51 27 21 38 177

I. Devotion

165 88 70 126 133 47 143 3  
11 67

J. Assay, proof

124 176 29 84

K. Wife of Jason; Euripides tragedy

167 72 153 172 174

L. Establish firmly or solidly

81 92 46 184 16 53 201 164

M. Name of a Mass. and N.H. river, as well as the town where it joins the Merrimack

129 1 13 105 80 25

N. Cough up

101 78 109 79 91 116 65 35

O. Snake worshiper

14 30 119 8 128 62 45 127  
161 197

P. Gold, silver, platinum, etc. (2 wds.)

170 32 156 93 185 26 90 113  
7 61 43

Q. Company of performers

193 20 198 157 179 115

R. Wearisome

166 19 154 10 150 183 9

S. 1894 novel by Theodor Fontane (2 wds.)

102 24 112 191 199 49 63 31  
57 118

T. Enraged; deathly pale; black and blue

110 75 175 56 23

U. Rat, heel, stinker

117 96 41 83 117

V. Most amusing or droll

171 99 77 163 200 187 82 87

W. Timely; suitable

175 33 73 37 17 40 151 107  
48

X. 1868 detective novel by Wilkie Collins (after The)

134 76 123 104 66 192  
58

Y. Formal appellation for Winnie-the-Pooh (2 wds.)

111 159 114 195 44 141 15 60  
132 54

Z. Chelae

103 106 42 18 140 188 202

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# PUZZLE

## Inse(r)ts

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

**E**ach clue answer requires, in order to fit in the diagram, the insertion of one letter to form a new word. That letter is never appended to the front or back of the clue answer and is always checked in the diagram by a crossing entry. Thus the clue answer PAIN can become PLAIN, but not PAINT or SPAIN.

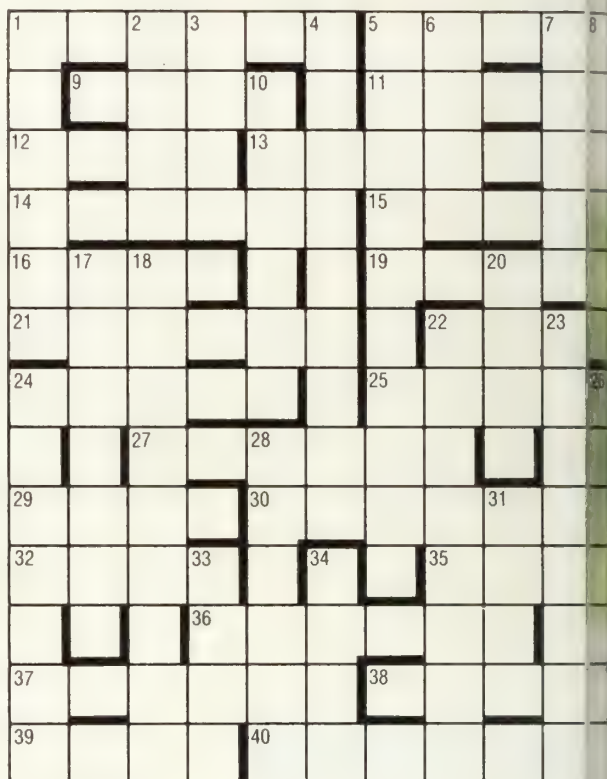
Clue answers include four proper names, one of them a trade name, and an uncommon word (24A). Diagram entries include one proper name, one common foreign word, and a dialectal noun (25A). The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 75.

### Across

1. Passing helps you get inside athletics (5)
5. Plans overturned . . . part of the military mess? (4)
9. Type spaces in English manuscript (3)
11. The shame of restitution (3)
12. Faint dead away from magician's aid (3)
13. He follows doctors I alert (6)
14. Drink during small emotional tension (5)
15. Fronts with curves (4)
16. One awful long time (3)
19. Make a coherent beam spanning villa's entryway (4)
21. Always suffering a reversal? Time to face the bank (5)
22. Intimate this becomes edible when put on a table (3)
24. Clan formed by decentralized Georgians (4)
25. Swamp with no footing causes injury (4)
27. Anger plays a part in *King Lear* (5)
29. Note the back of Grand Central (3)
30. Dog that hatches eggs? (6)
32. Take edict from Arnold Franklin (3)
35. Speed that is taken after heroin (3)
36. Gulf state's archenemy? (5)
37. Use effort to make overthrown king cover fraud in Egypt (5)
38. Mother covers youngster's rear . . . it's only a tot (4)
39. Remorse doesn't end sexual excitement (3)
40. Reduces after finishing off short ribs (6)

### Down

1. One type of inheritance we put into gold, following lead of deceased . . . (5)



2. . . . legatee's outspoken and pervading influence (3)
3. Herb's cruel at heart (3)
4. Man with gaiter broke tradition (8)
5. Boring spouse's tie (9)
6. Norm would need this amount to be superior (3)
7. Does needlework with many directions (4)
8. Kind of fungus that requires some balm, or else (5)
10. Pens' impressions (5)
17. Charming ladies forming lines in social gatherings (6)
18. Has something in common with a solver confused about beginning of puzzle (8)
20. Father Time's firm (3)
22. Bum entraps joggers after running? (7)
23. Whimper illogically, concealing menace (7)
24. Dramatic heroine, accomplished in Greek (6)
26. Republican caught in swindles beats it (6)
28. Advantage Ashe, but he dropped part of tennis match (5)
31. Tell a story that's plainer without odd characters (3)
33. Hockey goal cut score in half in comeback (3)
34. Eggs can become rank, one hears (3)

**Contest Rules:** Send completed diagram with name and address to "Inse(r)ts," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10011. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the July issue. Winners of the March puzzle, "Short Form," are Ruth Herbert, Palo Alto, California; John Serkin, New York, New York; and Sue Unterman, Northridge, California.



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## LETTERS

### McGovern in '92?

Jonathan Schell's essay "Speak Loudly, Carry a Small Stick" [March] examines the paradoxical fact that the positions I held as the 1972 Democratic presidential candidate on the Vietnam War and Watergate, though rejected by the electorate, were subsequently accepted by most Americans and incorporated into public policy. By contrast, Richard Nixon, the landslide winner in 1972, was forced by Congress to end the war in Vietnam—as I had demanded—and was then driven from office by the threat of impeachment for his unconstitutional actions during the Watergate affair. Yet today, writes Schell, "the disgraced president is honored, while the unblemished candidate who opposed him and warned the country of his abuses is held in disrepute."

I share Schell's sense of mystery concerning this apparent paradox; it has been an occasional source of disappointment and sadness for me in the years since 1972. Thus, despite the subsequent vindication of the positions I advanced in losing to Nixon, I declined to seek the presidency again in 1976—the year in which Jimmy Carter was elected.

But I have preserved my peace of mind and self-esteem with my faith that history will be kinder to the loser of the 1972 election than to the winner. "McGovern Democrat" may be a

term of opprobrium to those who measure political leadership purely in terms of a vote count. But as a former professor of history and as a longtime public intellectual, I know that we cannot escape history, and I am willing to accept my judgment.

I trust that there is more than a self-serving motive in my view that the 1972 Democratic presidential contest was a failure. I will be well advised not to run for office from the principles and ideas I have maintained within what is now some-what derisively called "McGovernism." Schell points out, I did depart from the Cold War assumptions that had guided Harry Truman, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. Those assumptions pulled us into Vietnam, fueled a Soviet-American arms race, and produced a ridiculous, self-defeating proportion of the national budget. Those assumptions were perhaps understandable in an earlier era; they were not acceptable to me in 1972, and in all probability they would not be pursued today by the leaders who once embraced them. Moreover, Clark Clifford and George Kennan, who advised those earlier leaders, are now offering advice closer to the truth than the nets of "McGovernism."

Finally, it is true, as Schell writes, that I have been largely shunned by the Democratic party leaders and candidates since my landslide loss to Nixon. It is true, too, that I have suffered some harsh references from the liberal press commentators who have attacked and repeat the conventional wisdom. But it is also true that everywhere I have traveled as a speaker in recent years, both liberals and conservatives alike have responded with approval.

After the 1972 election, one of

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respected men in the nation told  
 was twenty years ahead of my  
 Perhaps in 1992 I should test  
 thesis. I might not reach the  
 te House, but maybe I could  
 e that there is some common  
 in "McGovernism."

ge McGovern  
 ington, D.C.

## Christ's Sake

en I, a non-Christian skeptic,  
 offended by much of your April  
 a ["He's Back!!! Packaging  
 t's Second Coming"]. The un-  
 ing assumption seems to be that  
 econd Coming would be as vacu-  
 nd insipid as a publicity tour.  
 is issue deserves more than an  
 ded gag. Is it possible to spread  
 truth" in a modern plutocratic  
 How would a returned Jesus get  
 al message to His followers with-  
 ompromise?  
 id, hey, your forum also neglect-  
 ull's-eye of a satiric target: Jesus  
 did have a press agent who sold  
 his message for mass consump-  
 His name was Paul.

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 ock, Vt.

suggest that Christ would both-  
 h public relations is to belittle  
 ower of His message. Your at-  
 to ridicule public relations by  
 Christ is a thinly disguised at-  
 on Christianity and I find it re-  
 e. To use Scripture in such a  
 al, cavalier manner reveals a  
 d for the Bible.  
 a Christian, I know that Jews,  
 ms, atheists, and others who  
 God's Son and His message will  
 eternity in Hell.

n Mobley

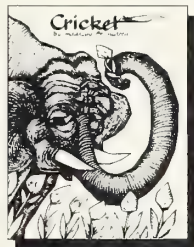
ave been in some doubt about  
 r's Magazine, but the April issue  
 did it.  
 lding the Christian religion up  
 ickle may simply be modern  
 alism in your opinion, but I as-  
 ou that your article is sacrile-  
 and unforgivably offensive to  
 tians. Just try publishing such an

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article ridiculing the Jewish or Muslim faiths and listen to the response!

I am outraged and, of course, will never permit your magazine in my home or waiting room again.

Stuart T. Ross, M.D.  
East Williston, N.Y.

In the wake of the controversy over Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*, it was prudent that no one individual claimed responsibility for the April forum. Nonetheless, Lewis Lapham should probably be on his guard.

The circulation of *Harper's Magazine* would certainly rise if some fundamentalist preacher put out a "hit" contract. But, of course, your forum merely takes what television evangelists do to its logical conclusion.

William M. Wilkerson  
Florida City, Fla.

Your attempt to package Christ's Second Coming—including a media

strategy, a sixty-second commercial, a book tie-in, etc.—shows that a number of problems are beyond even the abilities of your assembled image advisers.

Most obvious is the lack of continuity—it's as if each of your advisers is packaging a different Jesus. For example, the Jesus on the TV commercial is not wearing the wardrobe proposed by the fashion designer. Worse yet, there is obvious confusion over whether to package a Catholic or Protestant Jesus. At least the authors of the Bible, despite their own differences, presented a homogeneous Jesus Christ.

Also, your parody lacks one essential element: a press release. Imagine the excitement if one newspaper could claim to have received the first news leak from Heaven?

To fill this obvious need, I offer the following press release. But unlike your forum, my contribution is not designed to win converts. In life, Jesus Christ never won over public opinion. The public killed Him. Only

after His Resurrection—probably the most significant event in history—a few followers gain enough courage to spread the gospel.

For Immediate Release:  
Heaven, June 1, 1989

God, known Creator of the universe and all life on planet Earth, today reaffirmed the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

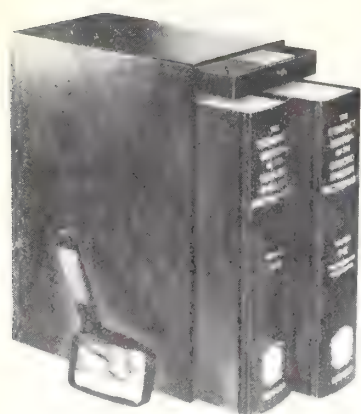
Citing the ancient prophetic signs of the times, God stated, "I have been telling people for ages that this was going to happen. Well, it's only a short time before all hell breaks loose, if you'll excuse the expression."

"Some of my best advance messengers, including Isaiah and Daniel, along with my protégé John, who wrote the Book of Revelation, foretold this event. They wrote for an audience of common folk, not for the religious class who claim a special right to interpretation."

Speaking for the first time in nearly two thousand years, God blasted the man Catholics, Protestants, and

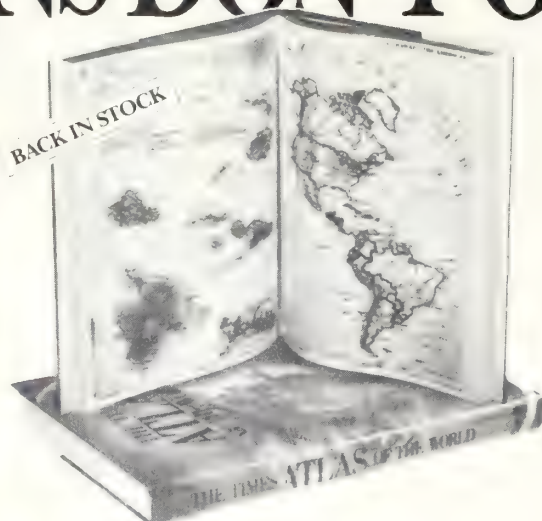
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who claim to talk with Him and  
 k on His behalf. "No, I don't  
 k to grown men who hide in  
 rs while begging for money over  
 television," God stated. "Like-  
 nobody speaks ex cathedra for  
 If you want to know what I think,  
 read the Bible."

softening His tone, God outlined  
 reasons for the return of Jesus  
 st. "My disciple Timothy ex-  
 ed the first and most important  
 n when he wrote, 'Christ Jesus  
 e into the world to save sinners' (1  
 othy 1:15). My return, in the per-  
 f Jesus Christ, will mark the final  
 ry over sin.

also, the entire religious scene is  
 of whack. Religion really is an  
 e. I knew that the modern-day  
 sees would substitute their per-  
 ambitions for My love. I create  
 le, not big churches and institu-  
 . That's why I had John write in  
 ook of Revelation, 'I will spew  
 out of my mouth' (3:16). I was  
 ring to modern religion.  
 inally," stated God, "there are

too many writers doing parodies of My  
 Son's return. Some actually think the  
 return of Jesus Christ is a subject of  
 humor. I'll forgive them. I just hope  
 they trust Jesus for the forgiveness of  
 their sins before He comes back."

Peter T. Burchard  
 Hoffman Estates, Ill.

My problem with your forum on  
 Christ's Second Coming isn't about  
 taste—good or bad. My problem is  
 that the forum was half-baked. Any  
 fourth-rate P.R. person knows that  
 the Second Coming must conclude  
 with the announcement of the Third.

Tom Couchman  
 Dallas

I read the April forum on the sub-  
 way and made a spectacle of myself by  
 laughing out loud.

I noticed, however, a curious com-  
 patibility between the major premise  
 of the forum and the position on the  
 reappearance of Christ held by *Share*

*International*, the magazine where I  
 am an editor. We contend that a great  
 spiritual teacher now living in the  
 Asian community of London is, in  
 fact, not only Christ, but simulta-  
 neously the Messiah, the Imam  
 Madhi, the Fifth Buddha, and  
 Krishna. That belief, you'll be re-  
 lieved to know, is not what I take to  
 be the compatible point with *Harper's*  
*Magazine*. But our magazine has as-  
 serted for years that the media's re-  
 sponse to the Second Coming is the  
 key to its impact on the world. Inevi-  
 tably, it is the media that will present  
 this figure to the world when He  
 comes. No other institution could get  
 that job done.

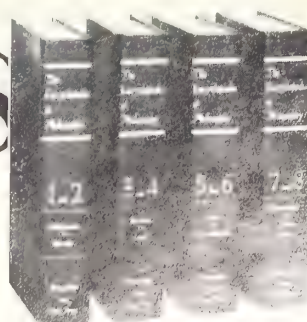
Carrol Joy  
 Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Civilization Meltdown

Léon Bing discovers a gold mine of  
 gangbanger philosophy in the forum  
 discussion of "gangology" ["When  
 You're a Crip (or a Blood)," March].  
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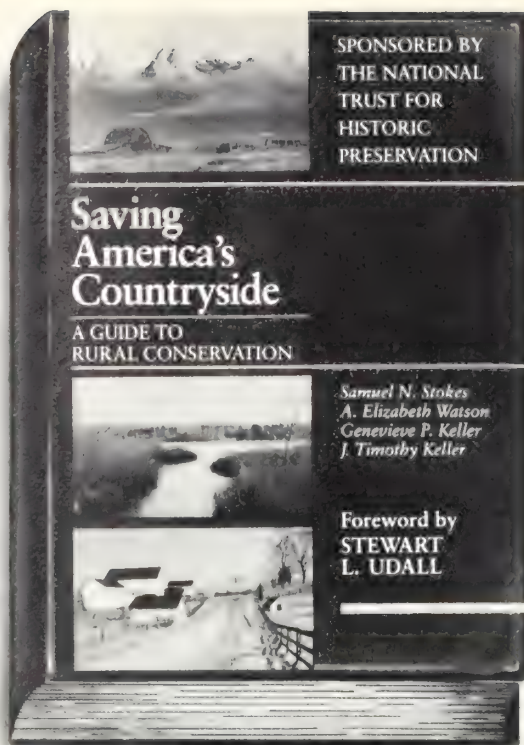
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sion is a slice of reality or a theatrical put-on by streetwise cons is not as important as the fact that violent street gangs are an enormous problem in our major cities.

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We can still reverse the process, but time's awasting. Our society must enforce, prosecute, imprison, educate. Political leaders, police, courts, prisons, schools, private industry, the media, and churches have vital roles to play. No public or private institution can watch from the sidelines. There are no sidelines.

Daryl F. Gates  
Chief of Police  
Los Angeles

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## Getting Back the Bones

The letter published in the April issue from Robert McCormick Adams, Secretary of the Smithsonian, in response to Douglas J. Preston's article "Skeletons in Our Museums' Closets" [February], essentially says to Native Americans: You prove the bones we've got are yours and then we'll give them back to you.

I am a member of the Hixson Tribe, one of the Three Affiliated Tribes whose attorney, Christopher Quale, made the unfortunate remark about putting the physical anthropologists "out of business" by recovering all of the Indian skeletons held in American museums. Most Indian tribes have no intention of doing so. What the tribes *do* want is the return of skeletons, artifacts, and other religious and cultural items carted off the scientific community during a time that government armies were decimating Indian tribes.

In response to Adams's contention that the "real problems of identity



"do not allow for the return of  
ain skeletal remains, I propose  
the United States create a Na-  
al Indian Cemetery located west  
e Mississippi, in which "uniden-  
d" remains could be interred.  
s, these remains could be shown  
same respect given to the remains  
ed at the Custer Battlefield Na-  
al Monument in Crow Agency,  
ntana.

Dross  
Jose, Calif.

is very nice of Robert McCor-  
c Adams and the Smithsonian—  
hty white, as the saying goes—to  
c with the Oglala Sioux in trying  
lentify the remains of tribal mem-  
. However, it is not the Oglala  
ix, or any other Native American  
e, who need to explain or prove  
hing. It is Adams who should ex-  
n why the Smithsonian is in pos-  
on of *identifiable* remains in the  
place.

icia A. Caggiano  
Francisco

## timental Education

compliment Lewis H. Lapham for  
acuity in his scathing indictment  
e current state of American high-  
education ["Multiple Choice,"  
ch]. As a university student, I  
t agree, unfortunately, with  
nam's characterization of the uni-  
ity as a mere stopover where one  
tires "the keys to the commercial  
dom." This view is held by most  
merican students. Yet one should  
dismiss an entire generation, be-  
e each year a passionate minority  
udents arrive at their universities  
ager anticipation of intellectual  
ulation.

at a university can be successful  
insofar as its students maintain a  
desire to learn. A professor's in-  
tention has its limits. Indeed, as  
nam notes, only a reordering of  
society's distorted priorities will  
ll in students an authentic desire  
arn. One's education, after all, is  
what one makes of it.

cer E. Ante  
mington, Ind.

## Waxing Canadian

It is perhaps a tad un-Canadian to  
wax poetic about patriotism. After  
all, we are an unassuming nation of 30  
million or so people; we do not swear  
by our Constitution, nor have we  
made our flag a religious icon. We are  
not fond of notions of nationalism,  
Manifest Destiny, or other such non-  
sense.

We do, nonetheless, possess a cer-  
tain amount of national pride—how-  
ever minuscule it might seem by  
American standards. We love our  
country. We do not like to be  
mocked.

It was with this in mind that I  
read—with utter astonishment, tru-  
ly—two letters in the March issue by  
Americans responding to Robertson  
Davies's essay ["Signing Away Can-  
ada's Soul," January]. It is an under-  
statement to say that these letters  
were grossly offensive and breathtak-  
ingly stupid.

The first writer informs us that  
Canadians "enjoy a patriotism of con-  
venience when they boast about such  
achievements as their national health  
system—something they can afford  
because America pays the political  
and economic price for the defense of  
the free world."

The second correspondent writes  
that "the obscurity of Canada's soul is  
not the fault of American culture but  
the result of Canada's inability to ac-  
quire a national spirit through some  
galvanizing, historic act."

These writers have fallen prey to a  
time-honored and mistaken assump-  
tion that everybody on this planet  
wants to be an American.

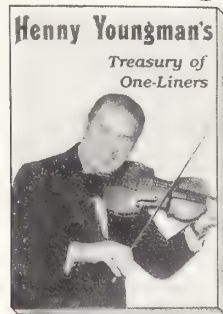
I can assure you that I, for one, do  
not. I do not, for example, want to see  
my country fund secret wars in other  
nations. I do not want to see liberal-  
ism accorded the status of political  
leprosy. And many of my countrymen  
feel similarly.

For the most part, Canadians like  
Americans very much. You are a  
friendly, gregarious people. You occu-  
py a land that is a nice place to visit,  
but—to put a fine point on it—not  
too many of us would want to live  
there.

Warren Kinsella  
Ottawa, Canada

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card reads, 'May I Cut In?'"*

And, of course, husband and wife jokes:

*"My wife went to the beauty parlor  
and stayed four hours. And that was  
just for the estimate."*

This book will make you laugh so much you  
can stop going to your psychiatrist.

*"Psychiatrist? I went to one who told me  
I was crazy. I said I wanted another opin-  
ion. He said, 'O.K., you're ugly too!'"*

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# NOTEBOOK

Belles lettres  
By Lewis H. Lapham

K. ———, the publisher, trying to be critical, talks about books pretty much as a washerwoman would about Niagara Falls or a poulterer about a phoenix.

—Edgar Allan Poe

**F**or some years now the big publishing syndicates have been playing a game not unlike Monopoly or musical chairs. At least once a season two or three of the smaller publishers discover that they have been sold (like antique silver or African ivory) to Rupert Murdoch, the Bertelsmann Verlag, or Time Inc. Although I had been reading the reports with the respectful attention owed to large sums of money making a stately progress across the pages of the newspapers, I didn't appreciate the consequences of these events until, last Tuesday in an Italian restaurant on West Fifty-sixth Street, I saw poor Hastings scribbling diagrams on a tablecloth. Earlier that morning he had asked me to meet him for a late lunch, and by the tone of his voice, which was one of poorly suppressed panic, I understood that we weren't going to talk about the youth and early sorrows of either Goethe or Joyce.

Hastings looked even worse than I had expected. He is a large and ordinarily optimistic man, subject to passionate enthusiasms (for a promising novelist, an obscure poet, or a new book of Czechoslovakian stories), given to wearing the same rumpled tweed suit for weeks on end, constantly rummaging through his pockets for a stray pencil. For twenty years he has been content to work as a senior editor for one of the city's most eminent publishing houses, and for twenty years he has been telling anybody who

would listen to him that the long-awaited revival of American literature was about to astonish the world with its brilliance. At innumerable conferences, he could be counted upon to appear as a bringer of good news, almost always carrying a boxed manuscript in which, so he said, he had discovered the portents of genius.

But on Tuesday Hastings had the furtive look of a man no more than twenty-four hours ahead of the police. He seemed somehow smaller than usual, smaller and quieter and much too carefully dressed, as if he had thought to disguise himself in the cloak of corporate rectitude. Seated at a corner table, pouring gin into his coffee and smoking too many cigarettes, Hastings was attempting to draw the organizational chart of the conglomerate that had bought his imprint for a price said to exceed the gross national product of Peru.

"I don't know which one of the divisions owns me," he said. "I've been to nineteen meetings in the last two weeks, but I still don't know which of the voices in the room is the one that sings the melody."

He had been told to acquire manuscripts that stood at least a three-to-one chance of arriving on the best-seller lists (in *Publishers Weekly* as well as the *New York Times*), and the instruction had cast him into the void of existential doubt that he previously had associated with the writings of Albert Camus or T. Coraghessan Boyle. His new editor-in-chief was a woman who used to decorate department-store windows. Books priced at \$24.95 she construed as luxury goods meant to be carried to the beach with the Bain de Soleil or placed gracefully on glass tables with

the flowers and the enameled side boxes. To the best of his knowledge she had never read any book and couldn't be mistaken for a catalog or a travel brochure.

"But if I don't come up with something by Friday afternoon at three o'clock," he said, "I'll know Beckett was trying to say in *Waiting for Godot*."

He had composed a preliminary list of titles, but he wanted the benefit of a second opinion before presenting it to his board of examiners. With a sense of apology and embarrassment, explaining that he still had daughter in college and a mortgage on the house in Putnam County, he handed me a typescript so heavily marked up with changes and crossings out that it looked like the first draft of a lyric by Dylan Thomas. As follows:

1. *The Priapus File*: Case history of the twenty-five most depraved men and women in the annals of psychoanalysis. Foreword by Dom Deane or the editors of *Vogue*.

2. *The Third World Diet*: Easy recipes, with results proven by the experience of people starving in Zaire, Mexico, Mozambique, and the Sudan.

3. *Aladdin's Lamp*: The one and only true secret of investing in the stock market, by Ivan Boesky or Michael Milken. Complete with 100 pages of graphs and a list of competent criminal lawyers.

4. *Jane Fonda's Book of Pets*, and *Jane Fonda's Book of Guerrilla Warfare*, and *Jane Fonda's Book of Antique Cars*.

5. *My Funny Valentine*: The letters and diaries of Al Capone.

6. *Geopolitics Made Simple*: A portfolio of maps, together with a glossary of terms ("détente," "win or



vulnerability," "hegemony," "arc  
 risis," etc.). Introduction by for-  
 president Richard M. Nixon.

7. *The Last Berwick*: A long novel  
 against the vivid pageantry of the  
 ory of the world. The author, pref-  
 ly an attractive woman (for the  
 tograph on the dust jacket), be-  
 the chronicle of the Berwick fam-  
 at the Battle of Troy.

8. *More for Me*: An anthology of  
 about how and where to buy any-  
 ing and everything. Entries ar-  
 ged alphabetically by commodity  
 ots, bread, chinoiserie, debu-  
 es, etc.). Commentary by Tom  
 fe.

9. *The 250-Minute Orgasm*: Ant-  
 Hindu techniques discovered in  
 carvings on a wall in Khajuraho.  
 fied after years of painstaking experi-  
 ts by a board of medical authorities  
 nected with the Beverly Hills In-  
 stitute for Creative Human  
 Relations. Illustrated.

While I was reading the list, Has-  
 stars stared at me with an expression  
 cute anxiety. I knew what it had  
 him to compose the list, and I  
 ed that I could have spared him  
 pain of criticism. I didn't have the  
 t to tell him that he was about  
 years behind the trends, that no-  
 wanted to hear any more disqui-  
 g news about money or war or sex.  
 buyers of books at \$24.95 a copy  
 ed to applaud the excitements of  
 ing and contemplate the stillness  
 rdens.

It's not a bad list, Hastings," I  
 "Certainly you're on the right  
 . But the conceptions are still  
 literary, and you haven't got a  
 e of what is truly commercial.  
 e's no Hollywood book; no life of  
 ; nothing about sports or Elvis or  
 odia; no sensational murder; no  
 e to a healthful and happy die-  
 e; not enough celebrities."

He continued the conversation for  
 her hour or so, but Hastings  
 dn't fix his attention on what was  
 g said. He drank a fourth and fifth  
 uler of gin and began to talk about  
 ing up a career as a trainer of per-  
 ing elephants. He had always  
 fond of the circus, he said, and  
 an animal act you knew where  
 stood with the crowd. ■

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# HARPER'S INDEX

- Percentage of all oil spilled in tanker accidents during the past year that is accounted for by the Exxon spill : 8
- Percentage of all oil released into the world's oceans last year that was the result of "routine operations" : 33
- Pounds of industrial chemicals legally released into U.S. waters each year, according to the EPA : 9,700,000,000
- Annual per capita mushroom consumption the EPA assumes in determining acceptable pesticide levels, in pounds : 1.2
- Annual per capita mushroom consumption, according to the Department of Agriculture, in pounds : 3.7
- Percentage change, since 1945, in the portion of U.S. crops lost to insects : +86
- Percentage change, since 1945, in the amount of insecticide used on U.S. crops : +900
- Estimated number of disposable diapers discarded each year by Americans : 18,000,000,000
- Amount DuPont contributed to the new National Plastic Museum in Leominster, Massachusetts : \$50,000
- Distance, in yards, from Walden Pond that developer Mortimer Zuckerman plans to build a corporate complex : 700
- Percentage of Americans who live within 15 minutes of their best friends : 45
- Estimated number of people who attended the National Hobo Convention in Britt, Iowa, last year : 15,000
- Ratio of the U.S. government's budget for housing to its budget for the military in 1980 : 1:5
- Ratio today : 1:31
- Estimated number of New York City residents temporarily living with others because they have no apartment : 360,000
- Price of a bullet-resistant mink coat from Juliana Originals in New York City : \$15,000
- Price of a two-hour walking tour of famous murder sites in Manhattan, given by Sidewalks of New York : \$10
- Estimated 1927 gross income of Al Capone, in 1987 dollars : \$600,000,000
- Amount Michael Milken earned in 1987 : \$550,000,000
- Back taxes owed by the estate of Samuel I. Newhouse, according to the IRS : \$610,000,000
- Rank of the Miami Federal Reserve, among all Reserve branches, in the size of its cash surplus in 1988 : 1
- Percentage of all paper money in the United States that contains traces of cocaine : 97
- Daily wage Exxon paid workers in Alaska this spring to scrub oil off coastal rocks : \$234
- Daily wage a French company paid U.S. volunteers in 1988 to pick sprayed crops to test pesticides' effects : \$100
- Number of states in which a family of four earning less than \$12,000 per year is required to pay income tax : 28
- Percentage of American Southerners who say they support *Roe v. Wade* : 53
- Chances that an American woman will have an abortion in her lifetime : 1 in 2
- Percentage of American fathers who say that they should share childcare equally with their wives : 74
- Percentage who say that they do : 13
- Price of a baby-nursing "Bonder Vest" for fathers, bottle not included : \$19.95
- Number of 12-year-olds who were married in Kentucky in 1987 : 5
- Percentage increase since 1983 in U.S. Catholic pre-school enrollment : 144
- Average ratio of students to teachers in an American public school classroom in 1967 : 27
- Average ratio today : 18:1
- Estimated number of languages spoken by students in the Los Angeles public schools : 1,000
- Estimated number of languages spoken in Africa : 1,000
- Government-approved dowry for a bride in Rwanda, in gaudy : 1
- Number of African cichlid fish killed to make a suit worn by John Cleese in a play : 1
- Maximum voltage of an Amazonian electric eel : 1
- World's record for underwater pogo-sticking in the Amazon, in : 1

*Figures cited are the latest available as of April 1989. Sources on "Harper's Index" is a registered trademark*

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# READINGS

[Court Document]

## SOLICITING FOR THE SECRET WAR: A CHRONICLE

*From a forty-two-page document submitted April 6 in the criminal trial of Oliver L. North. The document, prepared by the Justice Department, represents a distillation of still-classified memorandums, letters, and reports that the government was willing to release to North's lawyers. His lawyers had sought to have the actual classified materials introduced as evidence, but the government would not allow it. (Those materials had themselves been winnowed by the government from a larger number of classified documents that North's defense team had requested.) Before the document was read in federal district court, Judge Gerhard A. Gesell told the members of the jury that they should regard the information as "proven."*

**Y**ou are instructed that the United States has admitted for purposes of this trial the following facts to be true:

□ In 1983, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) William J. Casey asked Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger if the Department of Defense (DoD) could obtain infantry weapons that Israel had confiscated from PLO forces. Following discussions between Maj. Gen. Menachem Meron of Israel and Ret. Maj. Gen. Richard V. Secord of the United States government (USG), Israel secretly provided several hundred tons of weapons to DoD on a grant basis in May 1983. This was known as Operation TIPPED KETTLE. In February 1984, the CIA again asked DoD if it could obtain additional PLO weapons from Israel at little or no cost for CIA operational use. After negotiations between March 1984 and July 1984, Israel secretly provided the additional weapons to DoD in Operation TIPPED KETTLE II. DoD then trans-

ferred the weapons to the CIA. Although the CIA advised Congress that the weapons would be used for various purposes, in fact many of them were provided to the Nicaraguan Resistance as appropriated funds ran out. (The effort to funnel matériel to the *contras* at a time when there were limits on the amount of funds the USG could spend to support the Resistance also found expression in 1984 in Project ELEPHANT HERD, under which the CIA was to stockpile weapons and matériel provided by DoD at the lowest possible cost under the Economy Act.) DoD assured Israel that, in exchange for the weapons, the USG would be as flexible as possible in its approach to Israeli military and economic needs, and that it would find a way to compensate Israel for its assistance within the restraints of the law and U.S. policy.

□ On June 25, 1984, the National Security Planning Group (NSPG)—including President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George P. Shultz, Secretary of Defense Weinberger, DCI Casey, U.N. Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Gen. John W. Vessey Jr., Vice Adm. Arthur S. Moreau Jr., Counselor to the President Edwin Meese III, National Security Adviser Robert C. McFarlane, and Deputy National Security Adviser Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter (among others)—discussed third country funding for the Resistance. Casey noted that the CIA covered El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and one South American country as recipients of support for the Resistance. He said the USG provide Honduras and Guatemala with increased economic aid to enable them to continue to provide support for the Resistance. He said that the minutes of their meeting were subsequently introduced into evidence in the North trial. Vice President Bush said that if anyone object to the United States providing support to third parties to provide support to the Resistance under the findings of the NSPG, he would object to the introduction of the minutes of their meeting into evidence.

might come up is if the United States were to promise to give these third parties something in return, so that some people could interpret this as some kind of an exchange.")

□ In mid-August 1984, Adm. Poindexter discussed with President Reagan and others a proposal ascribed to Shultz that would permit Congress to "wink" at lethal support for the Resistance. Under Shultz's plan, the USG would supply non-lethal aid directly to the Resistance. The USG would provide military aid to El Salvador, which in turn would provide lethal aid to the Resistance.

□ In late summer and early fall 1984, CIA stations reported to CIA headquarters concerning apparent offers by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to provide assistance to the Resistance.

□ With McFarlane's approval, Lt. Col. Oliver L. North had met with a senior military official of the PRC in a meeting arranged with the

assistance of Dr. Gaston Sigur Jr. of the National Security Council [NSC]. Lt. Col. North told the military official that Nicaraguan Resistance leader Adolfo Calero would agree to a diplomatic concession to the PRC if the Resistance prevailed in Nicaragua. Lt. Col. North advised McFarlane that the meetings with the PRC official were likely to be reported in FBI channels. The FBI had been requested to make no distribution of this information except to McFarlane. Lt. Col. North asked McFarlane to inform FBI Director William H. Webster that McFarlane had endorsed the contact with the Asian official and further to apprise Webster that dissemination of intelligence regarding the meeting could jeopardize the operation.

□ Gen. Vessey (CJCS) followed up on Lt. Col. North's approach to the PRC military officer. The PRC agreed to provide anti-aircraft missiles to the Resistance, and Gen. Secord consummated the transaction and arranged shipment through Guatemala. The CIA reported the details of this transaction to McFarlane.

□ In late December 1984, Lt. Col. North advised McFarlane that a former European [official] had reported that anti-aircraft missiles might be available in a South American country for use by the Resistance in dealing with the Soviet-supplied HIND attack helicopters. Calero had discovered that although the South American country had the missiles, they would need a European country's permission for their transfer, since the missiles initially had been obtained from the European country [Great Britain]. Lt. Col. North furnished McFarlane with a memorandum to the President recommending that the President raise the anti-aircraft missile issue with a senior government official from the European country [identified in a subsequent court document as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher]. The memorandum recommended that the President offer a quiet expression of USG thanks, since the European official might not be fully aware of the constraints Congress had imposed upon the CIA and DoD with respect to the Resistance.

□ In early February 1985, Lt. Col. North advised McFarlane that, as a consequence of Ret. Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub's recent trip [to Asia to raise money for the *contras*], both the Taiwanese and the South Koreans had indicated to U.S. officials that they would help the Resistance.

□ At a February 7, 1985, meeting of the Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG) attended by Adm. Poindexter, Donald Fortier (NSC), Ray Burghardt (NSC), Michael Armacost (Department of State [DoS]), Fred Ikle (DoD), Nestor Sanchez (DoD), Clair George (CIA), Alan Fiers (CIA), Vice Adm. Moreau (JCS), and Lt.

[Credit Cards]

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'YOU'RE BLENDING AGAIN, GEORGE.'

From the Baltimore Evening Sun.

Col. North, among others, the CPPG principals agreed that a presidential letter should be sent to President Roberto Suazo Córdova of Honduras, and [agreed] to provide several enticements to Honduras in exchange for its continued support of the Nicaraguan Resistance. These enticements included expedited delivery of military supplies ordered by Honduras, a phased release of withheld economic assistance funds, and other support. The CPPG was in agreement that transmission of the letter should be closely followed by the visit of an emissary who would verbally brief [the Honduran president on] the "conditions" attached to the expedited military deliveries, economic assistance, and other support. The CPPG did not wish to include this detail of the *quid pro quo* arrangement in written correspondence.

□ On February 12, 1985, North proposed that McFarlane send a memo to Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, and Gen. Vessey informing them of the recommendation of the CPPG that expedited military deliveries, economic funding, and other support should be offered as an incentive to Honduras for its continued support to the Nicaraguan Resistance. The memo stated that this part of the message should not be contained in a written document but should be delivered verbally by a discreet emissary. The McFarlane memo sought approval to send a presidential letter to Suazo through an emissary. If Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, and Gen. Vessey agreed,

then President Reagan's letter would be signed and delivered through the U.S. ambassador to Suazo, and a USG emissary would advise Honduran officials of USG expectations concerning support for the Resistance.

□ On February 19, 1985, McFarlane sent a memorandum to President Reagan informing him of the recommendation of the CPPG to provide incentives to Honduras so that it would maintain its aid to the Resistance. The memorandum described each of the agreed-upon incentives. It further recommended a presidential letter to the leader of Honduras, to be delivered by an emissary who would very privately explain U.S. criteria for the expedited economic support, security assistance deliveries, and other support. President Reagan personally authorized the entire plan.

□ Later in February 1985, President Reagan sent the agreed-upon message to the U.S. ambassador. Shortly thereafter, McFarlane sent a memo to Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, and Gen. Vessey informing them that President Reagan's letter had been sent and proposing steps to be taken to implement the President's plan. The memo requested that the President's plan be implemented by the U.S. ambassador, as previously planned, and requested that the President's plan be implemented by the U.S. ambassador, as previously planned, and requested that the President's plan be implemented by the U.S. ambassador, as previously planned.

□ When



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[Contest Winners]

## SUFFERING ARTISTS



These pictures won awards in the "Migraine Masterpieces" competition, sponsored by the National Headache Foundation and Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories. Entrants were asked to submit artwork depicting what a migraine headache feels like to them. Above is *Migraine Five; We're in Pain* (left), by Rick Hutchinson, and *The Storm Returns*, Thomas Wood. The winning entries were exhibited at the Pyramid Gallery in New York City in March.

President Suazo [in March 1985], Bush told Suazo that President Reagan had directly expedited delivery of U.S. military items to Honduras. Vice President Bush also informed Suazo that President Reagan had directed that currently withheld economic assistance for Honduras should be released; that the United States would provide from its own military stocks critical security assistance items that had been ordered by the Honduran armed forces; and that several security programs under way for Honduran security forces would be enhanced.

□ In mid-March 1985, at a meeting with Casey and Deputy DCI John McMahon, Secretary of Defense Weinberger stated that he had heard that the ambassador of Saudi Arabia had earmarked \$25 million for the *contras*.

□ At a meeting in late March 1985 with McFarlane and McMahon, Casey expressed his concern that the administration would request authorization from Congress only for non-lethal aid to the Resistance and rely on third countries to supply weapons or funds for weapons. McFarlane stated that he would take the issue to President Reagan for his decision.

□ In mid-April 1985, Lt. Col. North advised McFarlane that the Resistance had received a total of \$24.5 million since appropriated funds had run out, of which more than \$17 million had gone for arms, munitions, combat operations, and combat-support activities. (This money consisted primarily of the Saudi contribution of which McFarlane was aware.) Future operations included increasing the Resistance

force, launching a special operations attack against Sandino Airport to destroy Soviet-supplied HIND attack helicopters, launching an operation against a Nicaraguan mining complex and opening a Southern Front along the Costa Rica-Nicaragua border. Lt. Col. North informed McFarlane that the funds remaining were insufficient to support these operations and recommended that efforts be made to seek an additional \$15–20 million from current donors.

□ In August 1985, Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge indicated to U.S. officials that he would be willing to provide assistance to the Resistance if the USG would help fund a certain operation in Costa Rica. The U.S. officials concluded that the operation could be funded if President Monge would take certain specified actions to assist the Resistance.

□ In the fall of 1985, Benjamín Piza, a senior Costa Rican official, agreed to permit the Resistance to construct an airstrip in Santa Elena, in northern Costa Rica. Payments were made to Colonel Montero, an official of the Costa Rican Civil Guard, for his services in guarding the Santa Elena airstrip.

□ In October 1985, the president of an Asian country was approached and advised that other concerned private and foreign sources had been supporting the Resistance with munitions and combat supplies, and that their identities had not been revealed. The Resistance had a specific need for communications equipment, and the Asian country produced some of the



best in the world.

□ In mid-January 1986, Lt. Col. North prepared talking points for a meeting between National Security Adviser Adm. Poindexter, Vice President Bush, and Honduran President José Azcona Hoya. Lt. Col. North recommended that Adm. Poindexter and Vice President Bush tell President Azcona of the need for Honduras to work with the USG on increasing regional involvement with and support for the Resistance. Adm. Poindexter and Bush were also to raise the subject of better USG support for the states bordering Nicaragua.

□ In mid-January 1986, DoS prepared a memorandum for Donald Gregg (the Vice President's National Security Adviser) for Vice President Bush's meeting with President Azcona. According to DoS, one purpose of the meeting was to encourage continued Honduran support for the Resistance. The memorandum alerted Gregg that Azcona would insist on receiving clear economic and social benefits from Honduras's cooperation with the United States. Adm. Poindexter would meet privately with President Azcona to seek a commitment of support for the Resistance by Honduras. DoS suggested that Vice President Bush inform President Azcona that a strong and active armed Resistance was essential to maintain pressure on the Sandinistas, and that the USG's intention to support the Resistance was clear and firm.

□ In late March 1986, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams offered Honduran President Azcona immediate additional security assistance. Lt. Col. North prepared a memorandum from Adm. Poindexter to President Reagan (with copies to Vice President Bush and Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan), describing the results of Abrams's discussions with Azcona. The total cost for the items ultimately agreed upon was approximately \$20 million.

□ In early May 1986, Lt. Col. North notified Adm. Poindexter that a representative of Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin had offered on behalf of Israel to furnish Spanish-speaking military trainers and advisers to the Resistance. Advisers would be placed in Honduras in connection with an Israeli plan to sell the Kfir fighter to the Hondurans. Other advisers would be placed on the Southern Front. Lt. Col. North advised Adm. Poindexter that Defense Minister Rabin wanted to meet with him privately in New York to discuss the details, and that Abrams liked the idea.

□ In early May 1986, McFarlane noted that the United States might obtain assistance for the Resistance from certain Asian countries, although he had lost confidence in the discretion of those countries. McFarlane told Lt. Col.

North that he would try to find a better alternative.

□ In May 1986, U.S. intelligence reports showed that a South American country was aware that the Reagan administration had asked Israel, Taiwan, South Korea, and an organization headed by a U.S. resident to contribute to the purchase of weapons for the Resistance. The South American country was aware that the PRC had already given anti-aircraft missiles, and that Honduras hoped that Israel would give extensive aid, including military assistance.

□ In mid-May 1986, Donald Fortier, the Director of Political-Military Affairs at the NSC, was advised that the situation for the Resistance was bleak. President Reagan needed to pursue means of obtaining additional aid promptly, including talking personally to heads of state to tell them that he was dispatching a special emissary with his personal request for their assistance to the Resistance.

□ At the NSPG meeting of May 16, 1986 (attended by President Reagan, Vice President Bush, Secretary of State Shultz, Secretary of the Treasury James A. Baker III, DCI Casey, Adm. Poindexter, and Lt. Col. North, among others), Shultz mentioned an Asian country and Casey mentioned Israel, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea as possible sources of additional support for the Resistance.

□ At the President's National Security Briefing on May 19, 1986, Adm. Poindexter discussed Israel and South Korea as possible sources of additional support for the Resistance.

□ In early June 1986, Adm. Poindexter and President Reagan discussed funding for the Resistance. Adm. Poindexter mentioned aid from third countries and the possibility of a letter from a private organization.

□ In the summer and fall of 1986, DoS—particularly Abrams, Sigur, U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Barrington King, and Secretary Shultz—had discussions with a senior Brunei official in an effort to obtain a contribution from the Sultan to the Resistance. Brunei subsequently agreed to contribute \$10 million to the Resistance.

□ In mid-September 1986, Amiram Nii adviser to Israel's Prime Minister Shimon Peres indicated that Peres would raise the issue of his upcoming private discussion with President Reagan, including Israel's offer to surrender PLO arms to the Resistance. Lt. Col. North suggested that Adm. Poindexter tell President Reagan that the Resistance was being set up by a foreign flag vessel. The Resistance. If Peres raises the issue, Reagan should be prepared to hold considerable stockpiles of weapons with ordnance used

[Correspondence]

## BIPARTISAN ARM-TWISTING IN CENTRAL AMERICA

*From a recent exchange of letters between nineteen members of the House of Representatives and Oscar Arias Sanchez, the president of Costa Rica. John Hull, the subject of the correspondence, is an American with CIA ties who lives in Costa Rica. According to a report released in April by the Senate Subcommittee on Narcotics, Terrorism, and International Operations, Hull was a "central figure in Contra operations on the Southern Front" from 1984 through 1986. The report also cites testimony from five witnesses that Hull was involved in cocaine trafficking. Among the congressional letter's signatories were eight Republicans and eleven Democrats, including Lee Hamilton, the Democrat who chaired the House Iran-contra committee. The translation of Arias's letter was provided by the Christic Institute in Washington.*

January 26, 1989

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you about an urgent matter regarding an American citizen living in Costa Rica.

On January 12, 1989, Costa Rican judicial police arrested John Floyd Hull, a U.S. citizen who has lived in Costa Rica for the past twenty years. Mr. Hull was charged with hostile acts against the nation and international drug trafficking. He remains in custody today.

We urge you to investigate Mr. Hull's case to ensure that the charges against him have been brought with just cause and to ensure that his rights under Costa Rican law and under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are protected.

It is our hope that Mr. Hull's case can be concluded promptly and that it will be handled in a manner that will not complicate U.S.-Costa Rican relations.

As you know, there is much debate in the United States over Central American policy. However, we all seek a fresh start now with a new U.S. president, and we all want to further strengthen the historically close U.S.-Costa Rican relationship. We thus want to avoid situations or incidents that could adversely affect our relations at this time.

Respectfully yours,  
David Dreier  
Lee Hamilton  
Dave McCurdy  
et al.

March 3, 1989

Distinguished Sirs:

I deeply regret your letter. It is impossible that you are ignorant of the significance of 100 years of democracy in Costa Rica, and of the model separation of powers that sustains our democratic system and that we Costa Ricans regard with such pride.

Mr. John Hull is accused of serious crimes, among them that of participating in the illegal trafficking of drugs to the United States. It pains me that you insinuate that the exemplary relations between your country and mine could deteriorate because our legal system is fighting against drug trafficking, no matter how powerful the people who participate in it or what external backing they might have.

It is not my place to judge Mr. Hull. That is done, in my country, with total independence, by the judicial branch. You cannot be unaware that the accusations against him are serious, nor can you be ignorant of the fact that he has been treated with the consideration obliged by human rights, about which Costa Ricans need no lessons. I should tell you, in closing, that the friendship between my people and the people of the United States is far above the level at which you want to place it.

Attentively,  
Oscar Arias Sanchez

[Correspondence]

## DAN, YOU'RE NO STRUNK OR WHITE

*From a recent exchange of letters between Dan Quayle and John Kenneth Galbraith, regarding Galbraith's nomination to the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle. The Inner Circle, which meets twice a year, is "dedicated to advancing America's heritage of freedom and prosperity by attaining a Republican majority in the United States Senate." Its more than 5,000 members, who are nominated by past or present Republican senators, are expected to contribute at least \$1,000 per year in campaign assistance to Republican candidates.*

Dear Mr. Galbraith,

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that at the last membership meeting of the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle your name was placed in nomination by Senator John Chafee, and you were accepted for membership.

To welcome you to the Inner Circle, Marilyn and I would like to personally invite you to the Vice President's residence on Monday, April



10, for a private cocktail party during our upcoming spring briefing.

Our official business meetings open the morning of April 10 when you'll be participating in closed-door strategy sessions that will give you an insider's look at the Bush administration's legislative game plan and the 1990 Senate elections. You'll also be invited to take part in something truly unique to the Inner Circle. After a day of briefings you'll be the honored guest at a VIP dinner hosted by a Republican senator, Cabinet member, or administration official.

Distinguished Americans who have already joined the Inner Circle include Bob Hope, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Stephanie Zimbalist, George Shultz, and Mario Andretti. Not all of our members are this well known. But like you, every one of them has demonstrated a truly exemplary commitment to our nation's ideals and principles.

I look forward to meeting you on April 10!

Sincerely,  
Dan Quayle  
Vice President

Dear Mr. Vice President:

It was very nice, indeed, of Senator John Chafee to nominate me for membership in the "Republican Senatorial Inner Circle." I make haste to accept. I also note with pleasure your invitation to dinner on April 10.

There are one or two things that do trouble me about this invitation which I'm sure you will clear up. You mention that there will be "closed door" briefings of the members of the Republican Inner Circle. This could mean that I will be the recipient of privileged information not available to the public at large. That does not trouble me, a retired professor. It does raise the serious possibility that some business participants will be getting information for their own privileged enrichment. Not a level playing field. This I am sure you will think distressing. Again, thinking of that reference to the "closed door," I wonder if some of those so selected may be paying money for this privilege, even though you have no intention of offering it. Doesn't this put you in a no-win situation? Either you are offering information for money-making purposes that is not available to the public at large or you are guilty of a certain fraud in giving the impression that there will be such advantage. I do hasten to assure you again that this does not trouble me in a personal way. I am not in business and will, of course, avoid making a contribution.

It is my hope, however, that as a member of the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle I can make a wholesome contribution. Specifically, I

would like to offer you editorial guidance in your literary activities, however modest, as Vice President. Thus, in your letter you say that Marilyn and I "would like to personally invite you to the Vice President's residence." I will counsel you as a leader in a great English-speaking country against so ungracious a use of the split infinitive.

Additionally, in your letter you write of

[Tips]

## DIALING FOR PRODUCTIVITY

*From "When and How to Use Nonmonetary Employee Rewards," in Supervisor's Factomatic, by Jack Horn, published by Prentice Hall.*

### *How to Make People Work Harder*

Recognition or applause: it costs nothing, so give it out freely. Every week, try to find somebody in your department that could use a little recognition. Go shake somebody's hand for a job well done.

The Telephone Technique: This technique doesn't work in every situation, but frequently it is worth a try under the right circumstances. Call the employee at home to thank him.

"Hello, John, this is Mr. Stone. I hope that I am not disturbing you, but I was very impressed with the report that you finished this afternoon and I am calling to thank you for the good job. Good evening."

Later...

"Who was that on the phone, John?"

"It was my boss."

"What did he want?"

"Nothing. He just called to thank me for the report that I knocked out this afternoon. He said that it was good."

"Gee, that's something. I bet he's a real nice guy to work for."

"Yeah, he's old. I bet he's got a lot of experience. I could probably knock out a special-report project in about 10 hours."

"Supper's on."

"Oh, that's all right. I'll be home in about 10 hours."

"Something truly unique to the Inner Circle." I will urge you to avoid so modifying the word "unique": something is either unique or it is not. There is no need for an enhancing adjective. Further, you use the word "host" as a verb, as in a "VIP dinner hosted by a Republican senator, Cabinet member, or administration official." Again, I will urge you to avoid any usage, even one in somewhat frequent use, that is at all questionable. "Host" is a noun; it must not be used as a verb or part of a verb form.

Let me speak again of my pleasure in my membership in the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle and my desire to be helpful. I especially appreciate your admirably expressed belief that I am qualified by my long years of expression on political matters.

Yours faithfully,  
John Kenneth Galbraith

[FBI File]

## G-MEN AT THE MOVIES

*From a 1968 FBI memorandum on Andy Warhol's film Lonesome Cowboys. Warhol's FBI file was recently released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request. The FBI investigated Warhol in 1968 and 1969 for possible violations of federal obscenity statutes. In September 1969, U.S. attorneys determined that the movie did not fit the Supreme Court's definition of "obscene" and declined to prosecute. Thirty-eight pages of the FBI's seventy-one-page file on Warhol have been released.*

November 6, 1968

On November 1, 1968, Special Agents [two names blocked out] attended the midnight showing of the motion picture *Lonesome Cowboys*, at the San Francisco International Film Festival, held at Masonic Auditorium, San Francisco, California.

[Taylor] Mead [an actor in the film] spoke to the audience for a few minutes in a senseless monologue and said something about not knowing whether to put the beginning of the movie at the end or vice versa.

No title or credits flashed on the screen. The film was in color, and an attempt had been made to synchronize the sound with the action.

All of the males in the cast displayed homosexual tendencies and conducted themselves in an effeminate manner toward one another. Many of the cast members acted their parts as if in a stupor from marijuana, drugs, or alcohol.

It appeared that there was no script for the

film but rather the actors were given a basic idea for a plot and then instructed to act and speak as they felt.

The movie opened with a woman and her male nurse on a street in the town. Five or six cowboys then entered the town and there was evidence of hostility between the two groups. One of the cowboys practiced his ballet and a conversation ensued regarding the misuse of mascara by one of the other cowboys. At times it was difficult to understand the words being spoken, due to the film's poor audio and the actors' pronunciation. The film also skips from scene to scene without continuity.

As the movie progressed, one of the actors ran down a hill. The next scene showed a man wearing only an unbuttoned silk cowboy shirt getting up from the ground. His privates were exposed. A jealous argument ensued between the cowboy who was observed running down the hill and the one wearing the silk shirt. The man in the silk shirt was then seen urinating; however, his privates were not exposed due to the camera angle.

Later in the movie the cowboys went out to the ranch owned by the woman. On their arrival, they took her from her horse, removed her clothes, and sexually assaulted her. During this time her private parts were exposed to the audience. At the end of this scene the woman sat up and said, "Now look—you have embarrassed those children." There were no children in the movie.

There was no plot to the film and no development of character throughout; rather, it was a remotely connected series of scenes depicting situations with sexual relationships of homosexual and heterosexual nature.

[Newsletter]

## PLEASE STAND BY: TV'S GLITCH PATROL

*From the Winter 1988 issue of Please Stand By, a quarterly newsletter about "technical difficulties" on television, published by the San Francisco Technical DiffCult.*

LETTERS

Dear *Please Stand By*:

A friend gave me your newsletter, and I would like to receive more. I am glad to know there are others out there like me, especially now that I am retired. I have two TVs on tables next to each other in my living room. I look for mistakes during programs, rather than between



them. Like the time a newswoman for WRAL [the CBS affiliate in Raleigh, North Carolina] was standing on the street in front of a bunch of kids talking about crack use among juveniles, and she said, "Back to you, Charlie," and nothing happened. She kept standing there and the kids were waving even more and started grabbing for her microphone. I taped that one, if other people are interested in swapping. I am interested in collecting tapes of sportscasters reading scores and highlights from one sport while videotape from another sport is played accidentally. I also have made boxes that can hold more than one remote-control device at a time. These are for sale or trade. Keep up the good work.

Scott Robinson  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear PSB:

I have a nifty trick I'd like to pass on to other TDers. As we all know, the toughest part of our hobby is that you never know when a technical difficulty will occur, or on what channel. I don't know about most of you, but I can't afford to videotape every channel twenty-four hours a day. So what I did was buy lots of old TV sets and stack them up the way a store would. Now, when I see a technical difficulty, I quickly tune the VCR to that station and let her roll. The only problem is I miss the first few seconds, which are often the best.

Leslie Leland  
Golden, Colorado

#### SIGHTINGS

*A selection of the best sightings sent in by cult cats and lone wolves from around the country.*

10/20/88—*Home Shopping Club (Cable)*  
4:30 P.M. EST. Electronic Flea Collar offered for sale caused audio feedback on host's line. Problem solved by pair of hands coming on camera and switching off collar. (Reported by Jim Morton, San Francisco.)

11/18/88—*TBS (Cable)*  
7:35 P.M. EST. Same episode of *Sanford and Son* ran on both Thursday and Friday. (Reported by many.)

11/23/88—*KDIO, Duluth, Minnesota*  
Right at the beginning of the ten o'clock KDIO newscast, the center camera zoomed in on the female news anchor's lips to focus. It didn't zoom out. The camera tilted rapidly down toward the floor. When they switched to another camera you could see the other news anchor, his face contorted with anger, screaming, "I don't know WHAT the hell is going on!" and tossing his papers in the air and walking off the set.

They immediately cut to the station's PLEASE STAND BY slate, which shows a bearded Viking in a horned helmet sadly watching a malfunctioning television set. Great!! (Reported by Dave Lunquist, Hibbing, Minnesota.)

#### CLASSIFIED

*Monkey Attack Video.* New! *Live at Five* broadcast from San Francisco Zoo, in which monkeys attack reporter. All ninety seconds. To trade for high-quality (no later than second generation, please) Pit Bull—Los Angeles County Animal Control Office "bout" from April '87. "Spike," PSB Box B6.


*Nudes!* Listing of all nude scenes in 1,300 Rated films; listed by running time (hour/minute/second). Program your VCR to record only the good stuff on late-night cable. Send \$29.95, money order only. "The Krugmeister," PSB B3.

### [Advertisement] RED BAIT

DIRECTORY OF EXPERTS, AUTHORITIES & SPOKESPERSONS PAGE: 157

If you want to touch something *basic* in your audience . . . move them to *action*: phone, write, praise, damn, cheer, etc. . . . bring something new, exciting and controversial to your broadcast market . . . make your airwaves crackle with the electricity of audience response . . . then you need to present —

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From the  
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[Notes]

## WRITING BACK

*From "Making Contact," by Annie Dillard, in the Summer 1988 issue of the Yale Review. Dillard is the author of numerous books, including Pilgrim at Tinker Creek and An American Childhood. Her new book, The Writing Life, will be published this fall by Harper & Row.*

**W**hen you publish a book, people send you surprising letters.

A Benedictine monk wrote. As a novice he went swimming with his confreres in Sagatagan Lake, Minnesota, where a fish bit off the tip of his left nipple. It later grew back.

A woman in Riner, Virginia, wrote to say that all summer she saw an odd, one-legged sandpiper. In place of his missing leg, someone had set a small wheel. She said he moved along the shore as smoothly as the other sandpipers. Nothing about this letter's context—its blue stationery, its well-bred handwriting, its courteous tone—led me to doubt her. The problem of attaching the wheel's axle to the sandpiper's skeleton, however, gave me pause. Perhaps

some skilled veterinary surgeon actually did release a wheeled sandpiper on a beach, as a great gag, and prayed to God someone would see it.

A man from Montana wrote to say he had named his Irish setter "Dillard": "I wanted him to APPRECIATE the ticking of NOW."

A well-known artist got in touch with me. He sent me several pieces he'd written about my work. In his letter he said, pretty much as an aside, "I don't mean to bother you, but would you tell me if God is here watching his creation and deciding who lives and who dies, or is he gone?" His son had drowned sailing a Sunfish. Did I happen to know if God directs events such as his son's death? There was no hurry on my answer, he said; he was just curious.

The most startling letters contain dead insects, particularly moths, which drop into my lap, fallen-off bent legs and all, when I least expect them, when I'm opening envelopes as fast as I can. People used to send Edwin Way Teale live tarantulas and scorpions in the mail. He dreaded little parcels. The people who write me simply throw the dead things in ordinary envelopes. If I'm quick I can spot a frizzy head or a pair of bristled antennae protruding from a folded letter. If I'm not quick, I unfold the letter unsuspecting, and the insects fall and shatter on the desk or tangle in my skirt.

A generous letter from a man named Geoffrey Manning ended, "Damned truly yours."

A college student wrote to inquire: What is transcendence, and how can I get more of it in my writing?

Personal encounters sometimes echo the bizarre quality of the mail. On an airplane I met two clothing designers, Christine and Zonda. Christine designed silk camisoles. Zonda did every sort of weird thing. After we talked about designing, they asked me what sort of books I wrote. "About nature." Zonda gave me a dull, incredulous look. After a time, she brought out, absolutely disbelieving, "You mean like . . . birds?" "Sure," I said, "birds and all sorts of things." Again a long, swallowing pause, then: "What else IS there . . . other than birds?"

An English professor sent me a check for \$2.50. He had read a Melvin Maddocks piece which quoted Cyril Connolly's saying that we should tip authors. I didn't know what to make of the \$2.50. I cashed the check.

For years I heard from a wino who spent all his time on Maine rivers in a sailing canoe. What has become of him? He sent me pictures of his canoe; its sail was red. He made me crazy brown-paper dustcovers for all my books—

[Letter to the Editor]

### A CAUTIONARY TALE

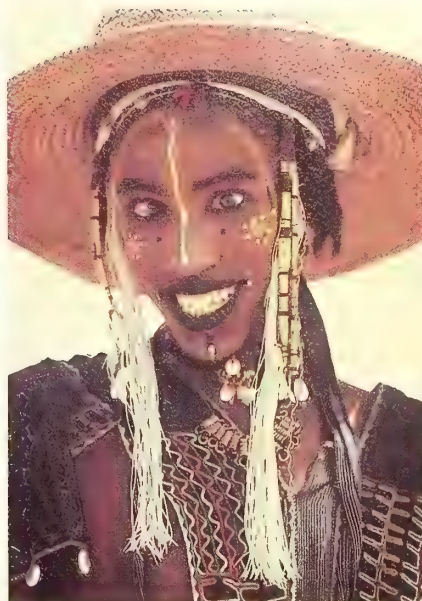
*From a letter to the editor by Thomas Scott, in the August 25 Carthaginian, a weekly newspaper published in Carthage, Mississippi. Scott wrote to complain about the paper's coverage of an incident in which he was injured. Authorities claim that Scott, who was treated at a local hospital and released, was inebriated. No charges were filed.*

Dear Editor:

I hope you will print this to get what really happened July 15 when I got shot in the head. Your story said I knocked on one too many doors and it made me look as though I asked for it. I knocked on the door to borrow a phone to get a ride home. Nobody came to the door, so I turned around to walk off and he shot through the door and hit me in the back of the head. That's what happens when an elderly man owns a gun. It could have been your child looking for help. I was lucky; you may not be.

Thomas Scott





These photographs and an accompanying text by Carol Beckwith appear in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body, Part Two*, a collection of essays edited by Michel Feher, Ramona Naddaff, and Nadia Tazi, published by Zone Books. The men pictured above are winners of the Yaake, a beauty contest held each year by the Wodaabe nomads of Niger. In the Yaake, which is judged by women, men use makeup and exaggerated facial expressions to display their charm, magnetism, and personality.

from thick grocery-store bags—on which he crayoned the books' titles and drew his own jacket designs. And it is these covers I have on my own copies of my first three books. Has he died? No one would tell me if he died, sailing the rivers in his canoe, with his bottle of wine and box of crayons. Once he sent a lithograph of himself, drawn by a friend. It revealed a good-looking man of seventy or more, with a big head of white hair and strong features.

Many letters came from a man who wrote speeches for a university president. He commuted to work all winter on ice skates. Later he became a translator of Foucault. He used to read passages from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* to his roommate. He described his roommate as "reading nothing but Northrop Frye." He said, "I read him the part about finding a deer leg boiling on the stove, and he slammed his Northrop Frye shut and said, 'That does it!' and didn't come back for two days."

A doctor has sent, over the years, bronze sculptures, gold necklaces, canned crabmeat, drafting instruments, a hand-bearing compass for boating, a summit pack for mountain climbing, a French easel, many toy robots, gold pens, stationery, wristwatches, leather handbags, and perfumes. When I begged him to desist, he said he enjoyed sending presents.

People send magazine subscriptions, photo-

graphs, sculptures, cartoons, slides, paintings, books, poems, offprints from scholarly journals, notepaper, calendars, and assorted natural debris: leaves, feathers, flowers, bones. A lawyer sent an Easter chick in a basket. A professor sent a dozen hand-tied flies. A physicist from Princeton Laboratories sent a pocket-size light polarizer, to help locate fish underwater. A Pennsylvania traveler sent glacial water, skulls, placer gold; Navajo shards, beads, jasperite, and turquoise. A molecular biologist sent a chart of the Rappahannock River and a feather from an Egyptian scarlet ibis.

It goes on. Just this morning I opened a letter from a flight attendant in Miami. She invited me to visit her, saying, "You are my friend, Annie Dillard, you are my true fucking friend."

In the same batch of mail, a man asked me to come to his conference and get "cross-fertilized."

A reader from upstate New York enthusiastically describes other worlds, while staring at a bean.

Last on this morning's stack is a letter from an Army post office address from Honduras, dated 7 Enero 1988. "I ready to believe the connection with grateful to have a



From *The Crowd Goes Wild*, cartoons and stories by Michael Maslin, published by Simon & Schuster

[Story]

## THE FEATHER IN THE TOQUE

By Susan Minot. From *Lust & Other Stories*, a collection published this month by Houghton Mifflin. Minot is the author of *Monkeys*.

**T**hey woke early, a still morning, all the summer stores closed, all the summer renters gone back to the city. It felt as if they were the last people left on the island.

It was gray out, the clouds low, the sky the same color as the light gray of the bedroom. It had been a gentle night and there was tranquility in the room. No cars hummed by on the out-of-the-way lane. The neighbor was not, for a change, riding his lawn mower. Outside the leaves had started to curl and some had started to fall.

The man got up and strolled naked into the hall. He lifted a shade, continued along the passageway to his study.

The woman lay in bed. She was younger than the man and in these few months had glimpsed a new world. Yesterday they'd had lunch with some friends of the man. How was Sabine? someone asked about one of his old girlfriends. The man shook his head as if the news were sad. Number two on the way, he said and slurped at an oyster shell. The woman thought of this ly-

ing in bed. Number two on the way. He'd said it with a hostile tone. Through the window she could see a white sun sparkling on the backwater. She got up to run a bath.

The bathroom was at the corner of the house, with windows facing in two directions. The faucet screeched through the pipes, water splashed in the old tub, echoing in the bare wainscoted room.

Suddenly a dark thing appeared skimming across the ceiling. The woman followed it into the bedroom, calling the man. A small bird was flapping up in a corner. The man appeared in the doorway.

"Look," the woman said. "We've got to get it out." Immediately she realized this was a useless thing to say. She folded her arms over her bare chest and ignored the man's sidelong glance. It was sure to be an annoyed one.

The bird alighted on the ceiling fan. Its head ticked side to side like a cuckoo, then it broke into a frantic flurry again. It veered crazily. It hit the wall. "Oh I hate that," the woman said.

The man lifted the window sashes all the way. He left the windows open at least partway all summer long whether he was in the house or not. He went on a lot of trips.

The bird flew into the bathroom. The woman watched intently, willing the bird to find its way out. It swooped back over their heads.

"Does this happen much?" the woman said.

The man was putting on his bathrobe. "It will fly out," he said, unconcerned. He was a tall



man and had to bend down to peer out the window. He grew interested in something over by the toolshed. His hand toyed in the large pocket of his bathrobe, planning something.

The woman stood on her tiptoes to look at the bird. It was a sparrow. The soft breast was panting, its tiny heart as hard as a peppercorn inside. It was disconcerting for her, but exhilarating too, this wild beating thing. Behind her the man walked out.

**S**he remembered her bath and went to shut it off. The water was up to the brim, all the hot would be gone. The sound of wings flapping was eerie in the sudden quiet. The man's footsteps could be heard going down the stairs.

In the living room past where the man was walking there was a bookshelf. Earlier in the summer, alone in the house, the woman had been looking for a book and had come across a framed snapshot behind a stack of paperbacks. It wasn't hidden, but it wasn't out either. The picture was of a woman in leopard pants with a toque set jauntily on her head. A shiny feather curled around the toque, shooting chicly off to one side. The woman slipped the photograph back behind the books. She did not mention it to the man. They had only just met; it was none of her business. In fact, it had given her kind of a kick to find it.

She thought of the picture downstairs now where the man was. She did not like the feeling.

The dark blur ducked into the bathroom. The woman shut the door. She stood on the cold floor, waiting. "Come on," she said and felt foolish.

Wings smacked the walls; the woman looked up. Just then the bird dipped down and shot out one window, undulating in a path directly away from her and the house. She almost cried out but something stopped her. No one would hear.

She lifted the drain and water trickled down through the whole house. The first time she'd been in the house no one was there and all the doors were open. The air blew in, everything was breezy. Books lay about, newspapers rustled on the table. Someone had made lunch. There was a wonderful feeling of light in the room. The people who had been in it must have been as languid and bright.

She stepped into the lukewarm tub. Out the window was a view of the lawn, the bench where no one ever sat, the great round tree in the center, its leaves going orange in spots and red.

Up to her neck in it, the water was cooler than she thought. Still it was warmer than the air. She wouldn't move yet. She listened downstairs for some sounds of the man beneath her. No doors had banged but that didn't mean any-

thing. The doors were always wide open.

She stood up and reached for a towel. Standing in the raised tub she noticed a woman's comb on one of the high bare shelves. She felt a pang and went to examine it. It was a tortoise-shell comb. On crowded city streets one might catch sight of a stranger's reflection in a store window and with a start recognize the stranger as oneself. This happened to the woman. Holding the comb she saw it was hers.

It gave her a kind of thrill to find something of hers in the man's house. But it surprised her too. The man would never have noticed. That sort of thing did not matter to him. She put it back on the shelf, leaving something for the next woman to find.

[Essay]

## UMBERTO ECO: A MEMO TO ROONE

*From The Open Work, a collection of essays by Umberto Eco, published by Harvard University Press. Translated from the Italian by Anna Cancogni. Eco is the author of The Name of the Rose.*

**T**he TV director of a live broadcast faces the difficult task of having to isolate a logical thread from an ensemble of events, but unlike even the most "realist" of artists, he can neither plan nor revise. He must stick to his "plot" while it is still unfolding among many other plots. By choosing to have the cameras follow a particular point of view, the TV director must essentially invent an event that is still happening, and invent it so that it is the same as the one that is taking place. In other words, he must both guess and predict the time and space of the next phase of his plot. As a result, his artistic activity is fairly limited and yet historically very new, for it must be informed by a particular sympathy for the event, an intuition and hypersensitivity (more commonly known as flair) that would allow him to grow with the event, to happen with the event.

Thus, the development of his narrative is the effect partly of art and partly of nature. The result will be a curious mixture of artifice and spontaneity, in which artifice defines and collects the spontaneity and spontaneity determines the artifice both in its content and in its form. Other arts, such as painting or sculpture, have already provided a model for this that determines the past and the future effects of a work. The TV director involves them in the ongoing structure of the



*From an article in the January issue of Smithsonian on dart-poison frogs, which live in the tropical rain forest of Central and South America. The sweat of these frogs is highly toxic and was traditionally used by hunters of the Chocó tribe, in Colombia, to coat the tips of arrows and blow darts. Since frogs of the same species are immune to one another's poison, they can mate without risk. The photograph was taken by Robert Noona.*

work. But with live TV, natural events do not proceed according to any formal scheme that has already foreseen them; rather, they require that such a scheme be developed along with them, simultaneously, at once determining them and determined by them. Even in instances where a director's work demands the least artistic commitment, he is involved in a creative experience whose very peculiarity is in itself an artistic phenomenon of great interest.

Live TV broadcasts are determined, in their unfolding, by the expectations and demands of their public, a public that not only wants to know what is happening in the world but also expects to hear or see it in the shape of a well-constructed novel, since this is the way people choose to perceive "real" life—stripped of all chance elements and reconstructed as plot. We shouldn't forget that, after all, the traditional narrative plot corresponds to the habitual, mechanical, yet reasonable and functional way in which we are used to perceiving the events of the world, attributing to them a single meaning. The experimental novel, by contrast, wants to demystify the habitual associations on which we base our interpretations of life, not in order to present us with the image of a non-life but rather to help us experience life in a new way, beyond or simply apart from all rigid conventions. But this involves a cultural decision, a "phenomenological" stance, the will to bracket assumptions—a will that the average TV viewer,

who watches television in order to gather some information and to find out (quite legitimately) how it will all end, does not have.

Which does not mean that, in real life, toward the end of a real baseball game, at the very moment in which a tie is about to be resolved in favor of one or the other team, the overwrought spectators won't suddenly realize the vanity of it all and lapse into the most unlikely behavior, such as falling asleep, leaving the field, starting a fight with their neighbor, and so on. If this were to happen, and the TV director were to film it, he would produce an admirably realistic non-story that would suddenly open up the currently held notion of verisimilitude. But until then, such a story will continue to be considered unlikely, whereas its opposite—the delirious response of the hopeful fans—will be considered likely, normal, the realistic climax of a realistic story. The public will demand it, and the TV director will feel compelled to give it to them.

This, of course, does not mean that live TV is doomed to remain a closed form. Not at all, for it already has numerous possibilities for opening its discourse and launching into an exploration of the profound indeterminacy of daily events. All it has to do is enrich the main event, filmed according to all the laws of verisimilitude, with a variety of marginal annotations, with rapid inquiries into the surrounding reality, with all sorts of images unrelated to the primary action but relevant precisely because of their unrelat-



edness, given the new perspectives, the new directions, and the new possibilities they propose for the same set of events.

Live TV might then have a rather interesting pedagogical effect: It could give the viewer the feeling, however vague, that life—that even he himself—is not confined to the story he so eagerly follows. These digressive annotations would then jolt the viewer out of the hypnotic spell woven by the plot and, by distancing him from it, would force him to judge, or at least to question, the persuasiveness of what he sees on the screen.

[Story]

## MILLIONS

By Marianne Wiggins. *From Learning Urdu, a collection of her stories, which Harper & Row will publish early next year. Wiggins, author of the novel John Dollar, is currently in hiding with her husband, Salman Rushdie, in Britain.*

Now that I've had lunch with the Swedish ambassador I can tell you everything you want to know about radioactive reindeer up in Lapland. They feed them to the minks. The reindeer. Yes. The reindeer used to feed the Lapps who depended on them as the native source of protein but now the Lapps feed reindeer to the hungry minks godbless'em on their furry farms because the minks are slaughtered when they're one year old for coats and stoles before they have a chance to die from radioactive reindeer meat. Another fact: There's a lot of lichen up in Lapland: yellow, gray. Radiation from an accident can't kill it. An ac-ci-den-tal-nu-cle-ar-di-sas-ter settles in its veins like spring. Cherryblossomtime, Chernobyl. Want to know what else? Radiation doesn't change its taste. The reindeer up in Lapland eat the lichen 'cause it tastes the same, that's what Lapland reindeer eat. Then they fuck like normal. Experts tell the Lapps that four-to-six-of-every-ten little baby fetal reindeer for the next five generations will simultaneously abort owing to the Accident no sweat, they'll feed those four-to-six-from-every-ten spontaneous abortions to little baby minks yum yum that's capitalism. In ten years' time, the Experts say, the herd will be as good as new and Lapps will move the herd once more across the frozen tundra. Is there frozen tundra there in Lapland, sir, or am I dreaming it I ask. There's everything, I'm told. There are power generators, electricity. There are relay stations for the television. Microwaves. Everything's computerized. I'm told their census is computerized from

birth, a phrase which mystifies me, and I'm told by 2010 their nuclear reactor plants will all close down because they've passed a referendum. They'll go back to burning coal. Very very good for Polish miners I am told. But still: Don't you fear there will be more Chernobyls someone from the press corps asks. Well yes, perhaps (and here we're treated to their sense of humor): the ambassador admits it's said in Lapland that there *might* be more but certainly there won't be less.

Some funny: the embassy's in Portman Place so after lunch I walk down Regent Street and try to catch a bus for home from Piccadilly Circus. I wait half an hour, more or less, I'm not really counting. When a Number 14 finally comes it comes three times in a row, a trinity of them, two nearly empty, and when I climb aboard the woman shoving on behind me yells, What's the matter with you chaps today? Her hair is the color of old teeth. "What 'chaps'? Do you see 'chaps' before your eyes?" the bus conductor asks. "Listen to me very carefully," he says. "Why are you talking to me about buses? Why don't you talk to Mrs. Thatcher?" Why? I'll tell you why. Mrs. Thatcher doesn't ride the bus, that's why, the woman says. "You don't like buses?" the bus conductor says, "Why don't you ride a camel?" You think I haven't ridden camels in my day? the woman booms. Of course I've ridden camels, the children rode them too, we all did, had to, in Karachi. And I'll tell you something else that you don't know, she says. One night a hundred years ago an ancestor of mine got into the wrong bed with the last of the Mogul kings, so I've got plenty of your kind of blood in my veins, so don't make idle chat to me—! "Idle chat? Do you hear 'idle chatting' in your ears?" he asks. *You are speaking very loudly* they are told by a bald man with a German accent. Why *not*? the woman wants to know. It's not Polite, she's told. "Polite?" the bus conductor shouts. I am a taxi driver in my country, says the accented man, and never do we speak to strangers with such loudness. Don't you lecture *me* about Politeness, he is scolded by the woman, Don't you try to lecture *me* in any *tone* man accent, he is told. Oh boy, I think it's time for me to walk, when suddenly *would* believe it, there goes Fozzi making a dash for it out the front door of the London Park Tower Casino in broad daylight. In Kensington. I mean *running*. Hey, I'm not afraid of *running*. Haven't seen *him* running I mean *running* in a pinstripe suit corner in Seville. Sure there was never *instancing* of *him* in a head of *him*.

I see this puffy red faced flunky in a pearl gray vest and morning coat explode from the casino bearing crumpled paper in his right hand, looking right, then left. He looks up toward Hyde Park Corner then he looks down toward Harrods then back up toward Apsley House again. He's wearing a pale lemon tie, color of béarnaise, and he's astonishingly puffy, like a pudding or an adder in a lather: I think, Next he's going to call the cops. Do they call the cops, these guys? Next he's going to call on law enforcement. What did the ol' Foz do? I wonder. Crazy Foz. Born to gamble, samba, and seduce. A party in a pinstripe suit all by his crazy self, party of one, making a quick getaway in a taxi down Seville Street while the well-dressed flunky stands there in a froth with these two other evil looking guys. "Now I'm going to tell you something, listen to me very very carefully," the bus conductor says. "Who are you to talk to us about Politeness?"

**N**ext day I come out my door and two guys in too straight suits are standing there so I go back in. They start beating on my door. Maybe only one of them is beating and maybe only one of them is beating with only one fist but the sound he makes with it isn't anything except only awfully frightening. Who's there? I ask. Immigration. I don't need any, I say. You better open up, they say. I open up a peek. Are you Simon Fishbine? they ask me. Do I look like Simon Fishbine? I say. We'd like to have a word with him. He doesn't live here, I inform them. No? Where does he live then? On the Riviera. Are you his wife? I'm not. Girlfriend? No. Are you related to him? No. What are you then? they ask.

Lord Curzon coined this little euphemism back in India a century ago called "right of portico" because he had one, see. A portico. Some people he allowed to come up to his door beneath his portico and others he left standing at the gates. I left these guys standing at the gates. Which is swell except they stood there all that day and all that night and all the next day until noon when I had to go out finally 'cause I needed to buy some water. Why don't you level with us sweetie, they said. About the telephone. It's listed in this Fishbine's name at this address and somebody by the name of Fausto Mahmet known as Foz has been making frequent calls to it. We want some information. Shoot, I said. Do you know this person Simon Fishbine? Of him, yeah—he's my landlord. Do you know this person Fausto Mahmet? Maybe. It's a common name. There are quite a few. We're looking for him, they informed me.

That night Foz calls me from his favorite Chinese restaurant. Foz, the Feds are after you, I

say. Oh you Americans, he says. Always so busy busy. Come and have some lobster with black bean sauce he suggests. It's midnight, I remind him. Fresh lobsters, he says, special fresh. Swimming right now in the tank with little seaweeds. Sorry, Foz, I say. An hour, yes? I'll wait one hour. You'll change your thinking and you'll come. I've put my powers on you.

Such a lot of powers—I go to bed and sleep the sleep of Innocence. In the morning there's a message on my answering machine. Thank you very much, it says. I waited for you many hours. After that my angerness made me go lose a million pounds at the casino.

So I get dressed and go out. How I met Foz: I got dressed one morning in September and went out. City of London. Rode the Number 105 bus from Shepherd's Bush to Southall and got off at Western Avenue to wander through the markets. Went into a restaurant I found there called the Brilliant. It was crowded. A man was sitting at a table in the corner, arguing with moneylenders. It was Foz. He had the largest head I've ever seen on any human being except Nancy Reagan. He came up to me and said I've put my powers on you, You are mine. He owned five ships, he said, under Libyan registry and he ran rice and oil from Limassol to Rio. I have paid your bill, he told me. The next few weeks whole taxi loads of fruit—guavas were his specialty—arrived at my front door in Chelsea every other day. But by then he'd started gambling, again. Or maybe he had never stopped.

I walk to Earl's Court, bent on riding on the Piccadilly Line to Arnos Grove just for the fun of it. A busker playing saxophone which echoes through the Underground extracts the loose change from my pocket. On the Tube there are no empty seats. Standing with a pole between us on a ride which makes us rattle in a dance, a woman wrapped in bright blue cotton asks me When am I do come-o na Harrods? Three stops, I say and hold up three fingers. She counts on her wrist, her elbow, and her shoulder one two three. Oh hell, I think: get out at Knights bridge, girl, and make for Hyde Park where there are things still growing like real flowers. On the Brompton Road I run into three Arab women wrapped in black silk scarves, their noses and their mouths masked too, convening before Kutchinsky's jeweler's windows, coveting the diamonds, so I cross the road. Across the road there is a big display of fur coats for next winter. Lots of fox and lots of sable. Lots of mink. Goll-ee, I hear somebody say. How much you think a coat like that must cost? I turn around. Before I have a chance to ask them if they're over here for a vacation I hear the woman answer Gosh. You mean if it's real. The mink. I reckon. Who knows? Honey? Millions. ■



# WHERE IS THE REHNQUIST COURT HEADED?

Congress and the state legislatures make the laws in our country—and the Supreme Court conducts an ongoing conversation about them, continuously measuring those laws against the nation's first principles expressed in our Constitution. This conversation has a public side: the oral argument, a session of pure legal combat, in which the attorney for each side has a half-hour to present arguments and take questions from the nine justices.

Oral argument is much more than a formal debate, however; it is a chance to gauge the profound changes that the Court might be making in its interpretation of our founding principles. Recently, the Court heard the case *Texas v. Johnson*, which poses the question of whether burning the American flag during a political protest qualifies as "speech" and is protected by the First Amendment, or whether it should be defined as a criminal act. To elucidate the subtler meanings of this case, *Harper's Magazine* procured a transcript of the oral argument and asked Lyle Denniston, an observer of the Supreme Court, to provide commentary on the least-known open issues of the government.

The following forum is based on the Supreme Court oral argument in *The State of Texas v. Gregory Lee Johnson*, heard March 21, 1989. Although the Court transcript does not identify the justices, Harper's Magazine dispatched an editor to Washington to record the names of the justices who questioned the attorneys. The text published here has been edited for grammar and concision. Ellipses indicate where passages have been removed because they were repetitive or tangential. The full transcript is available in most law libraries.

LYLE DENNISTON

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KATHI ALYCE DREW

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JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT

*Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Harry A. Blackmun, William J. Brennan Jr., Anthony Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall, Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia, John Paul Stevens, and Byron R. White heard the oral argument.*

## Reading Between the Arguments

When a case is called for oral argument, it is the only time the justices take their ongoing conversation about the law out in the open, before a public audience. It is during the oral argument that consensus building among the justices actually begins. Much of what they say and ask is actually intended to attract one another's attention—to define the issue for decision more precisely, to encourage trends in thinking, or to stir inclinations. Sometimes their questions seek to steer the lawyers' arguments, either by waving a lawyer off a weak point or by buttressing a good argument—often with tough interrogation.

The case of *Texas v. Johnson* involves the burning of the American flag by Gregory Lee Johnson at a political protest on August 22, 1984, during the Republican National Convention in Dallas. Johnson was arrested and charged under a Texas law forbidding the "desecration of a venerated object"—which is defined to include the American flag. Johnson was sentenced to a year in prison and fined \$2,000; he appealed to the state court of appeals, which upheld his conviction. He further appealed his case to the highest state court, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. By a 5-4 vote, that court threw out his conviction and concluded that the Texas statute was unconstitutional. The State of Texas then appealed this result to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On the face of this case and from the way the justices frame their questions to the lawyers ar-

guing the case, the reader may too quickly conclude that a decision against Texas is inevitable. But keep in mind: The Supreme Court had no legal obligation to take this case, and in order to be placed on the docket, at least four of the nine justices had to vote to consider the issue—indicating that almost half the Court saw some potential legal merit to Texas's claim.

It is typical of the Rehnquist Court to volunteer to question such assumptions—to let it be known that it may well disturb what might appear to be settled expectations about the law, particularly in the field of civil rights. Recently the justices have taken up challenges to such settled areas of law as abortion, affirmative action, and private forms of racial discrimination. The Court is in transition, and that alone makes this a fascinating moment to examine one of the Court's most hallowed rituals.

Not long ago, it is fair to suggest, the Johnson case would have been allowed to pass unreviewed, and the lower court's pro-First Amendment argument left to stand. The Warren Court took an almost "absolute" approach to the First Amendment—that is, it understood the First Amendment to protect all expressions of political dissent. The Burger Court by and large stood by those precedents. But since the arrival of Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia, and Anthony Kennedy, and the elevation of William H. Rehnquist to Chief Justice, the conservative bloc has been strengthened and emboldened. It is developing a passion to decide



for itself whether and how far to adhere to precedent—especially those established by liberal-dominated Courts.

In this case, Kathi Alyce Drew's opening remarks reveal her strategy. She argues that Texas has the right to protect the integrity of the flag as a symbol and that an act—such as a flag burning—which publicly degrades that symbol's value can be held illegal. Because First Amendment case law holds to a nearly absolute interpretation of protecting all language—even symbolic speech such as flag burning—Drew conspicuously avoids citing precedent. Justice Scalia immediately puts Drew on notice that she is on weak ground with him in making the “destruction of the symbol” argument. Indeed, he argues directly with her on the point, seemingly urging her to move off of it. Rehnquist tries to shore up Drew's argument, but Scalia is relentless in his challenge.

Although still a junior justice, Scalia has become the dominant figure during oral argument. More than any other justice, he seeks control of lawyers' arguments, either to rescue a failing effort or to undermine an apparently successful one. At times, what he does seems like teaching, at other times, badgering. Scalia, however, gives Drew no clear signal of an alternate direction he may want her to take. Sometimes he seems to urge her to take a dare, to argue for *enforced* veneration of the flag as a unique symbol. He is as aware as she is that the precedents are against her; in fact, he may well want to hear a direct assault on those precedents. But Drew declines, seeking instead to steer cautiously between them. However, Scalia's intent is opaque; he may simply be toying with Drew as a way to ridicule her weak performance.

William M. Kunstler, Johnson's lawyer, pursues a very different strategy. He cites numerous precedents, calling out quotations, especially from cases the authors of which are seated before him. The justices' prior opinions are reasonably accurate predictors of their future positions, but an attorney gains no points by seeming to attach a justice's name to one side of a case. That is seen as a bid for a justice's vote by flattery. Kunstler is practically shameless in adopting this approach. Scalia makes light of it by suggesting that the quotation from him offered by Kunstler was written during Scalia's prior role as an appeals court judge.

Otherwise, Scalia keeps to the sidelines during Kunstler's argument, and this may well be a concession that Kunstler cannot be expected to yield to any steering. It also may be an acknowledgment that Kunstler, a known maverick at the bar, might not be held in check were Scalia's aggressive style to ignite the lawyer emotionally. Given the Court's rather stiff notions

of civility, a lawyer such as Kunstler is always perceived as a threat to the Court's decorum.

Rehnquist has a well-developed reputation for impatience with lawyers who argue liberal causes, and that tendency emerges even more clearly when a lawyer has an identification, as does Kunstler, with radical leftist positions. This probably accounts for the strong signs of hostility Rehnquist displays toward Kunstler during the argument. Kunstler is less confrontational during this case than he can be, and at several points engages the Court in easy banter. He appears startled when those relaxing, and tension-relieving, moments get him into trouble with Justice Thurgood Marshall. Usually, Marshall is the one who is prepared to take an argument astray and seems to have fun while doing so. On this occasion, though, he is brusque with Kunstler for doing just that—thus displaying Marshall's seldom-seen hard edge, an edge that can cut down an attorney without ceremony.

The justice most likely to bring a discursive attorney up short is Justice Byron R. White, ordinarily the Court's most aggressive interrogator. But White is remarkable in the Johnson case for his *lack* of participation. Typically, he is in the midst of most arguments, testing lawyers in a mood of utmost impatience, giving no quarter, and almost never showing a sense of humor.

There are other justices who also seem to find the entire enterprise too serious an undertaking to engage in lighthearted exchanges. Justice Kennedy, the newest member of the Court, is one of them. Thus, it is a bit out of character when he makes a humorous remark about flying a flag in the rain, against the rules, because it is an “all-weather” flag. One of the strengths that Kennedy displays early in the Johnson argument is his keen sense that the Court must base its decision upon a narrowly defined, concrete principle, which can be articulated and defended. No doubt this is why he appears so skeptical about creating something as seemingly flimsy as a “flag exception” to the First Amendment. Like Lewis F. Powell Jr., the justice he replaced, Kennedy resists having the Court issue sweeping decisions.

Justice John Paul Stevens has a similar interest in keeping the Court's rulings within strict bounds, but he pursues that interest by seeking out implications for cases beyond the one before the Court, and he will chase those implications through a series of hypotheticals. Here, he explores what Kunstler's argument might mean in other contexts. Stevens is the most unorthodox of the nine justices, and he does not often play off other justices. He is often giving the

ing the same questions if he were sitting on the bench by himself.

O'Connor, like Stevens, comes to the bench unusually well schooled in the details of the cases, and they share an uncanny ability to knock a lawyer off guard with their keen attention to what sometimes seem like the smaller points of the case. O'Connor displays this tendency when she asks whether burning a copy of the Constitution might be a crime, and when she bores in on the relevance of the flag burner's motive. O'Connor shares another kind of attention to detail with Rehnquist—their easy familiarity with the precedents that bear upon the case. Both seem to get some reward from trying to shackle attorneys with relevant precedents: Rehnquist often does it with impish pleasure; O'Connor usually does it with deadpan seriousness—at times with testy impatience.

Justices William J. Brennan Jr. and Harry A. Blackmun take little part in the arguments of this case, which is typical. They intervene to clarify small, potentially significant points. Blackmun also sometimes disarms lawyers by seeking information outside the record of a case,

as he does when he explores whether the flag burned by Johnson had been stolen.

Examining the oral argument for evidence of which way each justice might vote is foolhardy. Last winter, a case that pitted press access to the public arrest and conviction records of a defense contractor against the contractor's right to privacy seemed—at oral argument—an easy victory for the press. Nevertheless, when the Court issued its opinion in March, the privacy argument prevailed by a vote of 9–0. Regardless of the outcome in the flag burning case, that the Court even chose to hear it reveals that the justices are willing to review cases that challenge what was once considered *settled* law about free expression. Americans can expect the Rehnquist Court to hear similar challenges to the First Amendment in the future. And, unlike most Courts—particularly the Warren Court or the Burger Court, which established reputations for creating new interpretations of precedents—the emerging trend of the Rehnquist Court, perhaps even its agenda, is an invitation to the legal community to challenge the abiding precedents of the Supreme Court.

## The Oral Argument

CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM H. REHNQUIST: We'll hear argument next in *Texas v. Gregory Lee Johnson*. Ms. Drew, you may proceed whenever you're ready.

KATHI ALYCE DREW: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice, and may it please the Court: The issue before this Court is whether the public burning of an American flag, which occurred during the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas, Texas, as part of a demonstration with political overtones, is entitled to First Amendment protection. The flag was burned in front of city hall during a demonstration march through downtown Dallas in a crowd of demonstrators and onlookers. The flag burner was convicted under a Texas statute which prohibits desecration of the national flag. His punishment was one year in the county jail plus a \$2,000 fine.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed his conviction and held that the Texas statute was unconstitutional since Mr. Johnson was a political protester. Judge Campbell of that court found that flag burning constituted symbolic speech. That court also found that the interest that Texas has in regulating the act of flag burning does not outweigh a protester's First Amendment rights to expression.

For purposes of this argument today and with

the Court's indulgence, the state will assume the symbolic speech standard\* and proceed directly to the question of Texas's compelling interest in regulating such conduct. Texas has advanced two compelling state interests. One is the preservation of the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity. The second is the prevention of a breach of the peace.

I would like to address first the nationhood interest. We believe that preservation of the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity is a compelling and valid state interest. We feel certain that the government has the power both to adopt a national symbol and to take steps to prevent the destruction of that symbol.

JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA: Now, why did the defendant's actions destroy the symbol? His actions would have been useless unless the flag was a very good symbol for what he intended to show contempt for. His action does not make the flag any less a symbol.

DREW: Your Honor, we believe that if a symbol is ignored or abused over a period of time that it

*\*Under Supreme Court precedent, certain forms of speech—including acts which intend to communicate an idea—may be restricted if the state can show a "compelling interest." Drew concedes that Johnson's flag burning is a form of speech and argues that Texas has a compelling interest in restricting such activity.*



can, in fact, lose its symbolic effect.

SCALIA: I think not at all. I think when somebody does that to the flag, the flag becomes even *more* a symbol of the country. It seems to me you're running quite a different argument: not that he's destroying its symbolic character, but that he is showing disrespect for it. You want not just a symbol, but you want a venerated symbol. But I don't see how you can argue that he's making the flag any *less* of a symbol.

DREW: Your Honor, I'm forced to disagree with you. If Mr. Johnson's actions in this case do not constitute flag desecration, then I am not certain what would.

SCALIA: His actions desecrate the flag indeed, but do they *destroy* the symbol? Do they make it any less symbolic of the country? That's your argument—that we have a right to have a national symbol. And if you let the people desecrate the flag, you don't have a national symbol. I don't see how that follows. We may not have a *respected* national symbol, but that's a different argument. Now, if you want to argue that we have the right to insist upon respect for the flag, that's a different argument.

DREW: Texas is not suggesting that we can insist on respect. Rather, we have the right to preserve the physical integrity of the flag so that it can serve as a symbol, because its symbolic effect is diluted by certain flagrant public acts of flag desecration.

REHNQUIST: Well, in a sense you're arguing for a minimal form of respect for the flag, aren't you? Not that the state can require you to take your hat off and salute when the flag goes by, but at least it can insist that you not destroy it?

DREW: Yes, Your Honor. To the extent that we are asking for any respect for the flag, we are asking for respect for its physical integrity. Certainly we do not demand that any individual view it with any discernible emotion, only that its physical integrity be respected. . . .

JUSTICE ANTHONY KENNEDY: Well, over the centuries the cross has been respected. I recognize one is a religious symbol and the other is a national symbol, but it's never been necessary to pass legislation to protect the cross.

DREW: That's true, Your Honor.

KENNEDY: So it may be that you can protect symbols by measures other than the imposition of criminal law.

DREW: Your Honor, I don't believe that a cross has quite the same character as the American flag, because there are many people in this nation who do not view the cross as a symbol. . . .

And this particular statute, Your Honor, would not protect that sort of a symbol. It recognizes that the flag is national property, that it belongs to all people, that all people are entitled to view it symbolically in whatever way they wish. Some people may give it great respect. Others may not. That's not what we're regulating here. We are simply trying to preserve the flag as a symbol for all people.

KENNEDY: Well, you begin by saying that it's a symbol and by acknowledging that what the defendant did was speech, is that correct?

DREW: We are assuming that standard.

KENNEDY: All right. What is the constitutional category you're asking us to adopt in order to say we can punish this kind of speech? An exception just for flags? [Editor's note: The Supreme Court has held that certain constitutional categories of speech, such as "obscenity" or "fighting words," may be restricted.]

DREW: With respect to the symbolic speech standard, we believe that there are compelling state interests that override this individual's symbolic speech rights, and that preserving the flag as a symbol is one of these. . . .

KENNEDY: This statute prohibits the desecration of a state flag as well?

DREW: Yes, it does.

KENNEDY: And if we upheld the statute in every state, each would have the same right?

DREW: Yes, Your Honor.

KENNEDY: So your category for one flag is now expanded to fifty-one. . . .

JUSTICE SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR: Could Texas prohibit the burning of copies of the Constitution, state or federal?

DREW: Not to my knowledge. Your Honor.

O'CONNOR: There wouldn't be the same interest in symbolism?

DREW: No, Your Honor.

SCALIA: Why not? What about the state flag?

DREW: There is legislation, Your Honor, that establishes the Bluebonnet as the state flower.

SCALIA: I thought so.

DREW: It does not seek to protect the flower.

SCALIA: Well, how do you protect it? If I had to pick between the flower and the flag, I might pick the flower. I don't know.

DREW: Your Honor, Texas

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that certain items are protected—and the statute is not limited to just the flag. But the portion in question here is limited to the flag.

SCALIA: I understand that. But we—up to now—have never allowed such an item to be declared a national symbol and to be usable symbolically in only one direction, which is essentially what you're arguing.

DREW: No, Your Honor. We're not arguing that at all. What we are arguing is that you may not publicly desecrate a flag, regardless of the motivation for your action.

SCALIA: Well, one hardly desecrates it in order to *honor* it. I mean, you only desecrate the flag in order to show your disagreement with what it stands for, isn't that right? . . .

DREW: Not necessarily.

SCALIA: Will you give me an example of somebody desecrating the flag in order to show that he agrees with the policies of the United States?

DREW: I think it is possible that an individual could burn a flag as an honor for all the individuals who died in Vietnam. This is their most prized possession. They're going to take it in front of Dallas city hall in the midst of a hundred people in the middle of the afternoon. They're going to ignite it, and they are doing this to honor the Americans who died in Vietnam. . . .

JUSTICE JOHN PAUL STEVENS: Your statute would cover that example?

DREW: Yes, it would, Your Honor, because it does not go to the motive of the actor. . . .

O'CONNOR: I thought this statute only applies if the desecration was done in a way that the actor *knows* will offend one or more persons likely to discover it.

DREW: That is correct, Your Honor. . . .

O'CONNOR: I thought that the Court had held that it's firmly settled under the Constitution that the public expression of ideas may not be prohibited merely because the ideas themselves are offensive to some of the hearers.

DREW: That's correct, Your Honor.

O'CONNOR: And this statute seems to try to achieve exactly that.

DREW: I don't believe that it does, Your Honor, because the pivotal point is *how* the act is carried out: not what an individual may be trying to say, not how onlookers perceive the action, not how the crowd reacts, but *how* it is done. If you burn the flag in your basement in the dead of night, you probably have not violated this statute, because the Texas statute is restricted to

certain limited forms of flag desecration.

JUSTICE HARRY A. BLACKMUN: Ms. Drew, it's probably of no consequence, but was the flag stolen?

DREW: Yes, Your Honor. . . .

BLACKMUN: Would you be making the same argument if he owned the flag?

DREW: Yes, Your Honor, we would.

STEVENS: Was he prosecuted for stealing the flag?

DREW: No, Your Honor.

STEVENS: I wonder why not.

DREW: I believe, Your Honor, that no one actually *saw* him take it. In fact, the testimony was that others took it and gave it to him. There were so many problems with proof that prosecution was very speculative. . . .

KENNEDY: You're asking us to define a constitutional category. And from what I can see, the category is that we simply say the flag is different.

DREW: That is one possibility that we have advanced. We have also suggested that another route would be to assume the symbolic speech standard and to look at what the state's interests are in proscribing this type of behavior.

O'CONNOR: Do you suppose Patrick Henry and any of the Founding Fathers ever showed disrespect to the Union Jack?

DREW: Quite possibly, Your Honor.

O'CONNOR: Do you think that when they drafted the First Amendment they meant to make that a prosecutable offense?

DREW: Of course, Your Honor, one has no way of knowing whether they intended it or not.

SCALIA: I think your response is that they were willing to go to jail, just as they were when they signed the Declaration.

STEVENS: They were hoping they wouldn't get caught.

DREW: Yes, Your Honor. I believe the classic line is "We hang together or separately."

SCALIA: You said that this flag may be different from other symbols. You don't argue that there's something unique about this flag?

DREW: Of course there is, Your Honor. . . .

STEVENS: But you have not made an argument that there's anything unique about the flag.

DREW: Well, Your Honor, I disagree. The flag is the visible manifestation of over 200 years of history in this nation. The thirteen stripes represent the original thirteen colonies, and every





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JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL: Suppose somebody burns an American flag with forty-eight stars.

DREW: I believe that that would be covered under this statute. That is clearly a past flag. Many people probably still own and display forty-eight-star flags.

SCALIA: But forty-seven wouldn't work because there was never a forty-seven-star flag, is that—

DREW:—that would depend, Your Honor—

SCALIA:—all you have to do is take one star out of the flag and it's okay?

DREW: That would depend, Your Honor, on how "flag" is defined. Congress itself defines the flag: "The Stars and Stripes in any number which to an individual who looks at it without deliberation may be a flag." The flag behind you looks to me to be a flag, but I cannot count fifty stars on it.

SCALIA: So you're saying forty-seven would be okay. I tend to think that's probably right.

DREW: . . . I'd like to turn briefly to the breach-of-the-peace interest. We feel that preventing a breach of the peace is a legitimate state interest. Again, the Texas legislature has made a judgment in this area that public desecration is likely to lead to violence. The record is clear that it was our good luck that a breach of the peace did not occur during this particular flag desecration. The appropriate test to be used in this area has not been decided by this Court.

There are two lines of cases. One is that public desecration of a flag is inherently inflammatory. Another is that "imminence" [of a breach of peace] must be shown. The goal is a *prevention* of a breach of the peace, not a punishment for a breach of the peace. And in analyzing this particular statute, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals said that there was no actual breach of the peace. That's true. Individuals who were seriously offended by this conduct were not moved to violence. I believe that the reading by the Court of Criminal Appeals is too narrow. If you have to show an *actual* breach of the peace, the purpose of a flag-desecration statute is obviated. Some other statute would serve that interest, but not a flag-desecration standard, because its purpose is *prevention*.

SCALIA: If that theory alone is enough, I suppose you could have statutes for Stars of David and crosses and maybe Salman Rushdie's book. Whatever might incite people, you can prevent such desecration.

DREW: Your Honor, there are other sections of this statute where other things are protected, specifically public monuments, places of burial and worship. I don't believe that anyone would suggest that one may paint swastikas on the Alamo in San Antonio.

KENNEDY: But that's because it's public property. Unless you say that the flag is somehow the public property of us all and ignore traditional distinctions of property, your example just doesn't work.

DREW: Your Honor, I believe that it does. The brief filed on behalf of Mr. Johnson by the American Civil Liberties Union confesses that there is no First Amendment interest in protecting desecrations of either public monuments or places of worship or burial because they are—and this is a direct quote—"someone else's cherished property." I think the flag is this nation's cherished property. The government may maintain a residual interest, but so do the people. And we protect the flag because it is such an important symbol of national unity.

SCALIA: If we say so, it becomes so. But it certainly isn't self-evident. I never thought that the flag I own is your flag.

DREW: Many justices of this Court have held that the flag is national property. Unless the Court has additional questions, I would like to reserve my remaining time for rebuttal.

REHNQUIST: Very well, Ms. Drew. Mr. Kunstler?

WILLIAM M. KUNSTLER: Mr. Chief Justice, may I please the Court: I would like to suggest that this particular law singles out communicative impact [i.e., not the act of flag burning itself but the reaction onlookers might have] for punishment. Now, Ms. Drew apparently concedes that you can write out of a statute what Justice O'Connor referred to: the question of whether the actor intends that what he's doing will seriously offend one or more persons likely to observe his particular act. . . . But it's not out as far as this Court is concerned. That's what the conviction was about, that's what the argument to the jury was about, that's what the charge was about.

SCALIA: Mr. Kunstler, I think you're stretching her argument. She said that there has to be offense, but it doesn't have to be the *intention* to communicate that offense. . . .

KUNSTLER: I can understand that rationale, but the Texas brief virtually took the notion of offense out of the statute. Now, maybe I do misstate her argument slightly, but the words "a flag burning" are in the reply brief.

Now, Justice Scalia, in your dissent in *Com-*



munity for *Creative Non-Violence v. Watt*, you said, "A law directed at the communicative nature of conduct must, like a law directed at speech itself, be justified by the substantial showing of need that the First Amendment requires." I subscribe to that wholeheartedly.

SCALIA: I was on the court of appeals then, Mr. Kunstler.

KUNSTLER: I hope that the elevation hasn't changed your thought. In any event, we subscribe to your opinion in our argument, and to Justice O'Connor's in *Boos v. Barry*\* when she said, essentially, that the state's interest turned only on the content of the speech and the direct impact that speech has on its listeners.

And in [*Smith v. Goguen*\*] Justice White in his concurrence said that that statute made the communicative aspect of the proscribed conduct a crucial element of the violation. And that's what we have here. Everything depends on the communication that is made by the actor to the people on the street. But in this statute, Justice Scalia, it goes even further and says "likely to observe or discover," which could be in the newspapers, for example, as well as being an onlooker. Given the concession that the act is pure speech, and given the past decisions of this Court on what should happen to a law that makes communicative impact the criterion for punishment, this statute fails that test. . . .

Now, with reference to the issue of national unity, I thought *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* set that to rest. In that case Justice Robert Jackson said, "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics—"

REHNQUIST:—well, the facts of *Barnette* were quite different from this. There the students were required to salute the flag.

KUNSTLER: And here, Chief Justice, people are required *not* to do something.

REHNQUIST: Yes.

KUNSTLER: And I think that's a comparable situation.

REHNQUIST: Well, to me they're quite different. You say that if you can't do one, you can't do

\*The Court ruled that a law prohibiting picketing near a foreign embassy that intended to bring that foreign government into "public odium" or "public disrepute" was unconstitutional because it was a "content-based restriction on political speech in a public forum, which is not narrowly tailored to serve a compelling state interest."

\*\*The Court ruled that a Massachusetts statute that prohibited contemptuous treatment of the American flag was unconstitutional.

the other. But it seems to me one could easily say you can't do one but you can do the other.

KUNSTLER: Well, you know, I understand that, but in *Street v. New York*, he did exactly what we're talking about here. Street burned the flag to protest the shooting of James Meredith in Mississippi in 1966.

REHNQUIST: And what was the holding of the Court in *Street*?

KUNSTLER: The Court indicated that it couldn't tell whether it was speech or flag burning. But the Court also said that it was an illegitimate interest in *Street* to compel respect by prohibiting criticism of the flag, including flag burning. So I guess we have a little difference of opinion on the facts. Can you say you can't force them to salute the flag, but you can force them *not* to show other forms of disrespect for the flag? I think they're the same, in all due deference.

REHNQUIST: Well—

KUNSTLER:—I don't know if I've convinced you, but—

REHNQUIST:—well, you may have convinced others. But take the "Live Free or Die" case. We said that New Hampshire couldn't require the display of the motto "Live Free or Die" on a license plate. But certainly New Hampshire could have prevented you from making other statements on your license plate.

KUNSTLER: As I recall, the Jehovah's Witnesses didn't believe in that motto, so they painted it out.

REHNQUIST: And the Court said you couldn't require someone to make an affirmation. But if someone applies for a New Hampshire license plate containing foul language, that can be proscribed.

KUNSTLER: I would agree with you on that, but that's putting something on the license plate that is profane. But what the Jehovah's Witnesses did was to paint out the state motto. They burned the flag, in essence.

REHNQUIST: I don't think we're going to see eye to eye on this.

KUNSTLER: . . . In front of the Supreme Court, when I came by today, there was a sign that said, "rain, and under 36 U.S. Code, flags shall not be displayed in inclement weather."

KENNEDY: Exemption One applies to all-weather flags.

KUNSTLER: That's not the case under the Texas statute.

MARSHALL: Mr. Justice Marshall.

to the case at hand?

KUNSTLER: Yes, I'm getting back to the case. . . .

STEVENS: Mr. Kunstler, is there any public interest in any of these regulatory measures that say don't display the flag in the rain or don't fly it upside down?

KUNSTLER: I don't know, but I don't think it matters, because they're not criminal statutes. They are recommendations. It used to be you couldn't fly the flag at night. Now you can fly it if it's illuminated and so on.

STEVENS: Do you think the federal government has any power at all to regulate how this flag is displayed in public places?

KUNSTLER: I don't believe so. . . .

KENNEDY: Can the federal government prohibit use of the flag for commercial purposes? Advertising?

KUNSTLER: I don't know. Ever since *Halter v. Nebraska*, where there was a statute against using the flag on beer bottles or cans, I don't know whether there can be any prohibition. Barbara Bush wore a flag scarf once. There are flag bikinis, there are flag everything. There are little cocktail flags that you put in hot dogs or meatballs and then throw in the garbage pail. They're flags under the Texas statute. . . .

STEVENS: Do you think the military would have any legitimate interest in disciplining a member of the military who showed disrespect for the flag on public occasions?

KUNSTLER: You might have a case there.

STEVENS: You might have a case.

KUNSTLER: The flag has a more peculiar significance to people in the army. I would have problems with it. But if a soldier destroyed a flag that was the property of the army, I think that soldier would be court-martialed. I'm sure it would violate what I used to call the Articles of War, which forbid "conduct unbecoming a member of the military" and which include a refusal to salute the flag.

STEVENS: I was only suggesting that maybe there is some identifiable state interest that's involved here.

KUNSTLER: Yes. But I'm not saying—I don't want you to get the wrong impression—

STEVENS: I think you're acknowledging that there is—

KUNSTLER: I'm not saying that. I'm trying to confine it to this case.

STEVENS: You did say that.

KUNSTLER: I know I did. I guess I have too much of a First Amendment consciousness.

With reference to breach of the peace, none of the flag cases that have ever come before this Court involved a breach of the peace. The only one I found where there was any violence was what Judge Tuttle found in the *Monroe v. State Court of Fulton County* case [in which an onlooker struggled with someone burning an American flag]. And Judge Tuttle pointed out that there was no clear and present danger. [The Court has ruled that speech which poses a "clear and present danger" to public safety may be restricted.]

REHNQUIST: What about *Finer v. New York*, where that fellow was speaking at Syracuse and said President Truman is a champagne-sipping bum, whereupon they told him he had to stop speaking because of fear the crowd would attack him?

KUNSTLER: Well, I don't think that changes the position, because it's no different than *Terminiello v. City of Chicago*\* really.

REHNQUIST: Well, it came after *Terminiello*, and it came out the other way.

KUNSTLER: I know, but apparently the imminence there was so—

REHNQUIST:—Imminent?

KUNSTLER: Thank you. Was so imminent. But when I was reading *Terminiello*'s remarks in the transcript, it showed he ducked several times. Apparently someone threw something during his rampage against the Jews, but this Court held that *that* wasn't enough. And there's no breach of the peace here and no imminence of the breach of the peace at all.

BLACKMUN: Well, then we come close to the Skokie cases.

KUNSTLER: Well, Skokie presents [an attempt by neo-Nazis to parade through a Jewish neighborhood]. But even there, you couldn't stop it.

BLACKMUN: That's my point.

KUNSTLER: If you're going to stop it, it has to be so imminent, as the Chief said, that it really reaches clear-and-present-danger proportions. Furthermore, the Texas statute is not limited to an imminent breach of the peace. It just says "in a way that the actor knows will seriously offend one or more persons likely to observe or discover his action." The Texas court of appeals said that this statute "is so broad that it may be used to

\*In this case involving a near riot during an anti-Semitic speech, the Court ruled that a law restricting speech that "stirs the public to anger, invites dispute, brings about a condition of unrest, or creates a disturbance" is unconstitutional.



punish protected conduct which has no propensity to result in breaches of the peace." Serious offense does not always result in a breach of the peace. The protest in this case did not lead to violence. A witness to the burning was obviously seriously offended by the defendant's conduct because he gathered the burned flag and buried it at his home. Nevertheless, however offended, this man was not moved to violence. Serious offense occurred, but there was no breach of the peace. One cannot equate serious offense with incitement to breach the peace. . . .

REHNQUIST: What was Johnson charged with when it was submitted to the jury?

KUNSTLER: Eventually he was charged only with flag burning. But initially, Chief Justice, he was charged with disorderly conduct. And then they dropped the disorderly conduct and substituted the flag desecration charge. . . .

I want to close with two remarks. One, Justice Jackson said in *Barnette*: "Those who begin coercive elimination of dissent soon find themselves eliminating dissenters. Compulsory unification of opinion achieves only the unanimity of the graveyard . . . the First Amendment to our Constitution was designed to avoid these ends by avoiding these beginnings." And in a recent article in the *New York Times* entitled "In Chi-

cago, A Holy War Over the Flag," J. Anthony Lukas said, "Whatever pain freedom of expression may inflict, it is a principle on which we can give no ground."

I understand that this flag has serious important meanings, real meaning to real people out there. But that does not mean that it may have different meanings to others and that they may not—under the First Amendment—show their feelings by what Texas calls desecration of a venerated object. The First Amendment was designed so that the things we hate—Terminello's remarks, burnings of flags, or what have you—can have a place in the marketplace of ideas. I submit that this Court should affirm the holding of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Thank you very much.

REHNQUIST: Thank you, Mr. Kunstler. Ms. Drew?

DREW: Thank you, Your Honor. . . . I fail to see how—if I understand Mr. Kunstler's concession—if one can protect government flags, why one cannot protect a flag that is not necessarily the property of the government but represents the danger of a breach of the peace and the denigration of the symbol. Unless the Court has questions, that will conclude my remarks.

REHNQUIST: Thank you, Ms. Drew. The case is submitted. ■



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# CATCHING A WESTBOUND FREIGHT

The hard freedom of the American hobo

By Bruce Duffy

**O**f all the pleasures he found on the road—better than outfoxing a railroad bull, sleeping in the dirt, or flirting with waitresses—Beargrease loved to wave at cars stuck at rail crossings while our mile-long freight train slowly clunked by.

Wearing foggy sunglasses and a greasy leather cowboy hat that looked like a roadkill, Beargrease would be sitting there in the hot, drowsing air, sunning himself in the freight car's great windy barn door—his stage, you might say—watching the world roll by... shaggy-topped corn, silos, hills. Then would come a sound of clanging bells. A railroad crossing! Ahead, a twinkling pileup of cars and trucks baking in the droughty August sun, behind a flashing gate. From that road-tanned face lathered with grime and a two-week growth, Beargrease's large white teeth would flash as he yelled to me, "Town up ahead!" Then, "Hey!—"

He really had to yell before I could hear it through the earplugs I often wore to drown the slamming, woofing, and screeching of the freight car. Beneath that noise, conversation was all snarls and gaps and hunking gestures, with me yelling back, *Hu-UUuh? Whaaaat?*

"I SAID..." Beargrease takes a deep breath. "A BIG CROSSING. MUST BE NEAR..."

Bruce Duffy's first novel, *The World as I Found It*, was recently issued in paperback by Ticknor & Fields. He lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, and is currently working on a new novel.



"WHAT?"

Beargrease yells again.

"WAIT!..." Digging out the plugs. "I CAN'T..."

But extending a grimy hand and beaming his most killing D'Artagnan smile, Beargrease is already waving like a returning hero to the faces buoying beneath those wind-

shields. Waving as if to say, *Yeah, you see me, Sweetheart! You, too, Sad Sack! I'm up here riding the high iron—up here LIVING for you good peeeeeple and, I'm, UH—* his head snaps around—*OUTA HERE. Goo-bye—goo-bye—goo-bye to all you sorry suckers stuck here in Rusty Springs, Dingaling, and Outaluck Falls...*

At this his hand drops to his side, almost haplessly, like a scrapping dog realizing there's nothing left to bark at. Turning again into the wind, Beargrease sprawls down on the hot steel floor, in the blocky sunshine. So long, towns. Good-bye, envious eyes. Waking up later, I see he has taken off his torn black T-shirt, his chest starkly white against his meaty red arms. He holds the shirt out to dry in the breeze. What might be Iowa or Maryland or Missouri we know. And the train, it stretches until you can't see it. The engine, stretches until you can't see it. Whirly, like a combine trying to outrun the heat. Distances.

The sky deepens. A late afternoon light. The late afternoon light.

*Slim let me  
know in his  
quiet way  
there'd be no  
complaining or  
wimping out as  
we traveled the  
1,700 miles  
from Iowa to  
Spokane*

and early stars, and Beargrease just a booted shadow by the blowing door. Away it all flows, so that when I pull out my earplugs, all I can hear is the whirring grindstone sound of the wheels, and over it the blinking babble of cornrows sputtering, *Whaa-Sockety-Ockety-Ockety*...

Now, Beargrease's partner and the leader of this expedition, sixty-year-old Seattle Slim—old Slim doesn't go in for this waving, "show-boating" business. But then Slim's a loner anyway, a wary, taciturn man who, unlike his flamboyant sidekick, easily could pass for a farmer. Slim's the *clean* one: There's another fundamental distinction between them. While Beargrease practically wallows in dirt, like a sparrow, Slim almost never changes his clothes yet somehow never smells or gets noticeably dirty. Through days of heat and grime, the self-sufficient Slim somehow remains clean as a cat in his jeans and checked short-sleeve shirt.

Sitting back in the slamming shadows, his scuffed cowboy boots crossed and an unfiltered Camel cupped in his hand, gray-haired Slim would half the time be just staring down the other wall. Or I'd look back and see him drowsing in the prairie wind, his face twitching

moves. I see him stealthily falling in step behind the wheels of a car, stalking like an Indian behind the legs of his horse. Or dropping to a knee in the weeds while the bull—the rail cop—drives by, headlights bouncing and gears sputtering, during one of those unquiet nights we spent in the yards of Mason City, Iowa; Minneapolis; or Havre, Montana.

Still, in spite of its gaming, snatch-the-back quality, rail-riding's no mere game to Slim. What's more, he let me know in his quiet way there'd be no complaining or wimping out as we traveled some 1,700 miles from Iowa, north to Minneapolis, and from there west, across Minnesota and North Dakota into the Rockies.

Montana, then across the Idaho pass to handle to Spokane.

All through our youth and beyond, we harbor certain insupportable illusions about travel and the freedom of other places—of a splendid new life destined to cover us like a cat, if only we can shed the burden of this one. As much the way a child will have imaginary friends, I had such a life waiting for me when I was a young man. All through the mostly rotten period of my early twenties, I would tell my

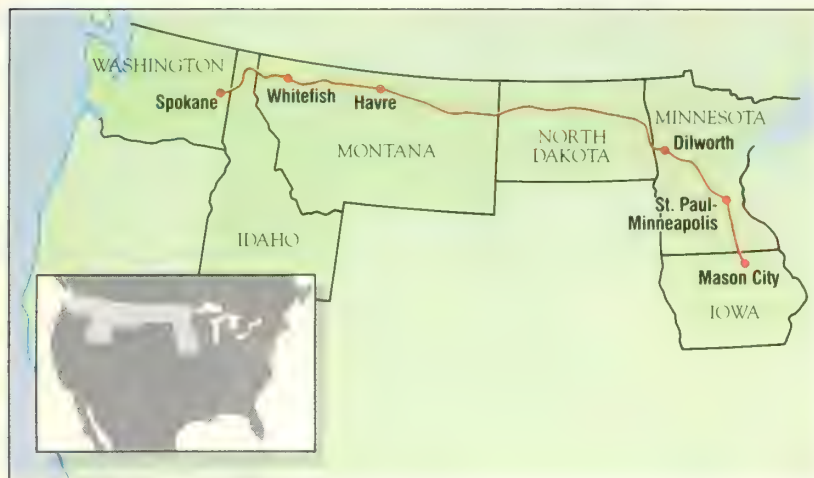
that if all else failed—if I failed or if I failed or if, more likely, my writing failed—there would always be the road.

The road. When I was feeling badly desperate, this word functioned as a kind of rip cord—it was an image I could plunge in my panic to slow my descent when all other remedies had failed. Before I did anything desperate, I would instead imagine myself hitting the road. Crashing through the guardrails, I would hurtle into freedom, plunging deep into the realm of another self, while the old one sloughed off and slowly floated to the surface like a dead skin.

I dreamed, all right, but I never did that far, I never did really plunge or die. Oh, I did *travel*. With my backpack,

beard, and ponytail, I hitched across the country several times. I told myself I didn't need any cushy writer's program or graduate school. In my arrogance and confusion, I didn't want anyone to tell me anything. Wandering would teach me and inspire me to write—I'd enlist in the Hard Knocks School, following migratory paths tramped down over the years by Kerouac and Burroughs, Hemingway and Jack London.

I wince—half-smile—as I write this. I am young, remember, still green and relatively stupid as both a man and a writer. I truly don't know how anyone, man or woman, learns how to honestly write or think, let alone how anyone becomes a decent adult human being. In my



that old wine twitch from his drinking days, an era that ended four years ago when after years on the skids, picking apples and lemons for his next bottle, Slim saw it was a choice between drinking or dying.

The new Slim is addicted only to coffee and cigarettes, while piquant wine he speaks of picturesquely, like the jugs of an old lover. Naw, outa sight, outa mind, that's Slim's motto. No-See-Um Slim, the Gray Ghost. Tall, raffish Slim, stealing through the rail yards, his pinched face twitching as he motions us ahead like the ghostly remnants of his old platoon. At first, it's a bit shocking to see an older man act truly *sneaky*, but Slim, he's got the



of mind then, I could have gone round the world and never found what I wanted. Never in those miles did I cease to be essentially an cooker, a writer. Never did I break the grip of consciousness fundamentally outside and in, orbiting the world like a moon.

I guess it was this apparent inability to just sit or be that always made me wonder about myself. How does a man exist down there, submerged for years at a stretch, essentially rootless, nameless, motherless—virtually pastless, without effect? It seemed a kind of suicide.

Until, it's one thing to want to ride with hobs at twenty-one, while one's character is still malleable and life is relatively cheap. But now it was different. I was thirty-seven, a man with responsibilities, too old even for the army. Then there was my wife. I told myself that I had to be useful for my wife, that I was living for two. But, see, this was fear talking: I was really afraid for me.

"Hey!" Beargrease was glaring at me. "Just do

We were in the huge Burlington Northern yards in Minneapolis. It was late, we were all tired, and I was balking. In the darkness, miles of cars were rolling back and forth, westbound and eastbound and trains breaking up. Violent cars were slamming together, setting up vibrations in reactions that volleyed down the line like rolling thunder. From the weeds where we were under the white-hot stadium lights, the chugging cars looked like the teeth of a black chawer.

And now Slim was getting testy. "Listen," he said, his voice moving up a notch. "Stop thinking—just follow us. Don't think and you'll do it."

"Fine? It was insane. They were proposing to grab, gear and all, across moving trains to get the train we wanted.

"Hey, look," I said, not about to be shoved around. "This may be a piece of cake for you, but"—I felt myself reaching—"I've never done it. I mean, can't we catch an easier train?"

At this Beargrease looked at Slim and shrugged. They both did. Then, leaning over and staring into my eyes, Beargrease said slowly, "Try, man . . . you know the difference between high-school ball and pro ball?"

Meaning, *Get on the train, asshole. Don't whine, just jump.*

I could see the stumps of my legs lying across the track. Football, bullball, murderball—whatever "sport" this was, I left my brain behind, suddenly less afraid than furious at what had befallen only a bullying initiation rite. Under the popping lights, over gleaming swirls of chugging rails, I ran after Beargrease, my pack slung and bedroll swinging. As I approached

the lumbering cars, I could hear compressed air spurting. Blue diesel fumes swirled in the light. Beargrease was already over; I saw his black hand clenching over the massive iron coupling: "Gimme your stuff! Quick! Quick, goddamnit!"

"All right, goddamnit!"—I was running sideways, dancing just ahead of the whanging wheel going *ka-kunk, ka-kunk*. Slipping and stumbling over the jagged stones, I lobbed my pack, caught the iron rung, then swung myself up to the perforated catwalk over the jogging air hoses and slow-swaying coupling. Beargrease swept by, while before my face beat the flashing sides of another freight. My head was a slamming black tunnel. Through the fumes, I heard Beargrease calling, "The rung, man! Watch the fucking rung!" With emphatic stabs, he was pointing at the little ladder by my feet: "Don't get your leg caught or you'll get dragged. . . ."

Back he ran through that buzz saw, chasing down our car, while behind me Slim was yelling, "Go, go!" and I all at once saw how it is.

Don't whine, don't think, just jump.

All you gotta do is jump.

**A**n easy train . . .

Hard-nosed and realistic as I thought I was then about the hobo life, I came burdened with certain unavoidable expectations. Middle-class expectations that the hobo invariably holds in deep contempt. *Why should anyone do things the hard way?* This was what I meant, in effect, when I asked about the easy train. And what is the easy train but the Good Life, the Easy Life that we, as people of middle- or upper-class means, believe we're entitled to in what amounts to an unwritten contemporary Bill of Rights?

Sure, Beargrease and Slim were basically good, resourceful, trustworthy men. They knew why I had come, and I knew they were looking out for me—or were so far as such concern stretches in their world. Oh, it's not that a man can't have a few buddies or a partner. It's the survival, look-out-for-number-one notion that, when push comes to shove, you're not responsible for, beholden to, or hooked on anybody anything. Not booze, drugs, or women. Not life of begging or handouts when you fear to despise helplessness. Not money or comfort of any kind. As a hobo, you're a voluntary vagabond, not homeless or anybody's victim but your own. Your allegiance is not to God, to a man, to a woman, to a place, to a country, and you certainly aren't suckered by love. Especially love. Your one true allegiance—you are your freedom—is to yourself. Freedom is to your survival what a rifle is to a soldier. Your freedom is yourself, your freedom is yourself.

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From their viewpoint, then, Beargrease and Slim had good cause to be irked with me. Whereas I felt they were being reckless and stupid, they felt I was being a wuss and a complainer. But then, they had a point. What could have been more middle-class than my hunger for danger and experience without a corresponding willingness to accept the full consequences? Much as I wanted the Real Thing, I still sought control. In a world where there is deliberately no control, I was trying to draw discreet limits, as if this were a ski resort where I could take the beginner's course and then proceed at my own speed. But they weren't buying this. Control was more than uptight, it was unfree. *Shut up and eat it*, that was my freedom. Out here, freedom was like a western freight at night, slow to start, but then never stopping. Once that train got rolling, all you could do was hold on, snared like a flea in the coat of a dirty dog.

**F**irst day out, Beargrease and I have to hook up with Slim in the yards of Mason City, Iowa. But when we reach the depot where Slim's supposed to be jungled up, there's no sign of him.

"Damn!" Beargrease stands there rubbing his whiskers with his blunt hand. "Well, come on. He's bound to be at our other spot down the yard."

But he's not there either. Finally, on the edge of a field between the yard and a street of faded houses, Beargrease drops his pack and bedroll. Though it's only 11 A.M., it's well over 100 degrees and due to hit 106 or 107 by afternoon. It's sure no time to be traipsing around with packs and water jugs, hunting for Slim.

"Look," says Beargrease after a minute. "How 'bout you wait here with the stuff while I go look for Slim? You got plenty of water. You mind?"

"Hell, no," I say. Boy, am I ever gung ho. "Really, you go on."

But no sooner do I say this than I can feel a weaselly creature clawing at my insides. Trying to sound as offhand as possible, I call after him, "Be gone long?"

Beargrease looks a little blank. "Oh, I don't know. 'Bout an hour, maybe." He smiles hopefully. "Naw, not long."

Only an hour! I wave him off, then settle down to use the time wisely, thinking I'll re-write my bedroll and maybe write down a few notes. And the hour passes quickly. I'm not waiting so much as *expecting*; I'm keeping a trust as I squat beneath a big oak, sucking down stale water, with the sweat oozing.

And even the second hour isn't so bad. Things can happen. In my mind, Beargrease has an hour's grace—even two. But when it stretches past three hours, it begins to prey on me, the

heat and the waiting. Slithering up in hives from the ground, the heat is stunning, most hypnotic. In that dry wind, I can hear grass burning, fizzling like a field of tiny fires, and every bird now driven from the sky.

It's past five when I awake, sprawled under the tree, smearing ants off my face. Then, sitting up, I see some woman eyeing me from a street across the way. Oh, great! She's shaking out a lint mop and staring at me in disgust, probably about to call the cops. The door slams, and there seething as tufts of lint slowly float across the field.

Six hours! Sure, it's some lousy hobo in a station rite! I can see them loitering in some air-conditioned Wendy's, just cackling themselves while the tenderfoot broils out here.

Well, I won't take it! I've worked myself into a fine fit when I hear Beargrease call out "Hey, man! How ya doin'?"

He's across the field with Slim.

I must look like a shipwreck, staring at him. Fortunately, I'm too surprised, then too relieved and worn out to deliver my fiery confrontational speech. And who can read them? They're both friendly and natural when I walk over, not even remotely apologetic.

"Well," says Slim, looking around. His voice has the slow, unflappable quality of an air pilot over the cabin intercom. "Maybe you oughta get some groceries. Get Bruce here somethin' cold to drink. Yeah, I figger we'll get us a little nap, maybe catch out 'bout nine night. Should be nice and cool then."

We do a lot of waiting, as it turns out. Most of the hobo's life is spent waiting and hiding. In this heat, we'll turn the clock upside down until Slim decides. We'll travel by night, like nocturnal animals.

Late that night, we're sleeping in a dry drainage ditch at the foot of the tracks, waiting for a train that Slim expects sometime after midnight. Slim's not worried about oversleeping—the train will wake us. Dressed and ready, we're conked out, waiting for the rumbling of a fifty-ton wake-up call.

**S**lim and Beargrease go back a few years, actually.

Watching them together, I sometimes wonder if, in a distant, distinctly unsentimental way, Slim didn't maybe feel somewhat fatherly toward his forty-six-year-old partner. It is Slim who had taught Beargrease how to read "Old Dirty Face."

A veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, Slim gave Beargrease his first lesson back in 1976, a year after Beargrease had returned from Vietnam with his Vietnamese wife and three kids. After a decade of war, working as a clerk





t machinist for the navy and Special Forces places like Hue and Pleiku—and this after ending years at sea in the merchant marine—Beargrease found stateside family life a virtual e state. By the time he ran into Slim in a he was bored stiff living with his family and king in the shipyards of Seattle.

Of course Beargrease had had his share of rking and allied excess over in Nam, but it with Slim that the long slide really started. n they were drinking pals, drinking in the st way. "Well, you know," says Slim, his getting twitchy at the mere thirsty thought . "We was drinking that *whhhhy-ine*." In the e allusive way Slim talks about the melodi- and complex sounds of trains, Slim rhaps- s about cheap wine: "Oh, yeah, man! MD 20 and Ripple! Sweet Gallo and Mogen id, MMMM-wah!... And do lemme hear Nee-ight Train Ex-press!"

hat was some jumping, the rail-riding they then in their old wining days. Together, 7 rode the trains blind. Blotto. Waking up en in the mountains. Coming to unaccount- miles away in places like Pasco, Washing- , and Whitefish, Montana, with faces llen, blue as grapes, and the sun like a cosh heir eyes.

eyond the craving for alcohol, though, it ns they both suffered a deeper, more uncon-

scious thirst. This was a thirst for the danger and excitement of war, for hardship and constant change. And maybe there's something to be said for a little fear and excitement. A little ruckus can do wonders to keep the past at bay. Running through the yards can simulate that whooping combat feeling. Running and chasing down trains can summon that adrenaline rush of hunting and being hunted. It's when we stop running that the dam seems to crack for old Slim; it's when he stops that the past comes thundering down like Niagara over him.

**B**eargrease clued me in to Slim's eccentricities shortly after the three of us met last August at the National Hobo Convention in Britt, Iowa.

Every year since 1933, the little farm commu- nity of Britt has hosted the convention, and a week I camped out there, talking to v- "boes" and vagabonds. Today, most of the real or so-called, are old-timers, and quite unabashedly by car and can plane. The year I was there, a train all the way into Britt. So it no stir one night, near the end of the when a freight rolled by the hobo en boes dropped off. Slim... The out.

Beargrease's charm can be misleading: It lulls me into the illusion that we share the same basic values

Who's the funky cowboy dude with the shades? I guess it was the grubby-assed hat, that and the outrageous grin, that made me ask a couple of days later if I could ride west with them after the convention. With a dubious look over the top of his sunglasses, Beargrease glanced at Slim, then shrugged: "Well, I guess that'd be okay."

Not exactly overjoyed: that was the feeling I got, from Slim especially. Slim wasn't one of these safe, grandfatherly old hoboes now softened by civilization. No kid was gonna want to climb up on Slim's lap. Slim still had the look—I mean that unbenevolent, slightly submerged look of a man who meets you not eye to eye but like an elevator stuck between floors.

I wasn't surprised, then, when Beargrease mentioned Slim's "moods." Beargrease didn't say much. Mainly, he alluded to an unhappy end to Slim's army career—something to do with his drinking, I gathered. Also, there was a wife who had divorced him, then remarried him before dumping him for good. Most likely there were children, too, probably grown and now long gone. I guess there's always a family or love hidden way back in the picture.

Beargrease is divorced now, and his two oldest children are grown. But he still has his daughter, twelve-year-old Poppy, living with him on the little pig farm he runs outside Seattle. Ten or eleven months a year he still works at the shipyard—many boes go on and off the road and work far more than you'd expect. Still, if Beargrease is more mainstream or social than Slim, this only makes him that much harder to read, in a perverse way, especially when he'll start needling me, saying semi-funny, seminasty things. Whatever sparks it—Slim's moods, my intrusions, or just the tensions of the road—I'm learning that Beargrease also has quite an edge to him. That charm of his can be misleading: It lulls me into the illusion that we share the same basic values.

So here we are again. In the Minneapolis yard, minutes after my comeuppance for that "easier train" business, we're running down the



tunnel between moving freights. The westbound train screeches to a halt, and Beargrease runs down the line to find us a good car.

"Here!"—Beargrease leans out of the darkened car—"I got us a good one up here."

It's a freight car with both doors open—good ventilation and two escape routes, no less. Beargrease is all smiles now. After a day struggling to get out of the two-mile-long yard, the two partners are probably more relieved than they'd care to admit.

"Hey, now!" Beargrease is calling back to Slim from the head

of the car. "I hear it. We're gettin' air."

We all hear it, the whoosh of the air lines being hooked up to the brakes—usually a sure sign of departure—followed by the slow ticking of brake shoes releasing in drums. Then comes slow rocking and wrenching of shocks squeaking rivets. We're off.

"Well, all right!" Now old Slim is cackling. Testy old Slim is high now. The wounded recluse has turned into a grinning old devil with pop eyes. Peering back through the bang door, gripping a cigarette in the side of his mouth, he gives his infernal blessing to the fire-red clouds hanging over Minneapolis: "Goodbye, Minny! And bye to your goddamn twin brother, too!"

We're all excited. I'm whooping and slapping Beargrease on the back. "Look!" Beargrease's eyes are slits in the wind. "We got us two giant big-screen TVs tonight!"

Exploding before us, the land is a beautiful disaster. In the moonlight it has a forest-like look, white-dark and foreflattened, with a queer infrared perspective of memory. The train swinging by the pulls along the walls; I'm yawning by those two giant doors, buffeted by the wind and speed. Trees and phone poles slip away; in the whorling darkness, houses slowly rip loose and tumble off as in the teeth of a tornado. Away it roars in one great accelerating blast of darkness—boom—a tingly moonlit lake—boom-boom-boom—waferish birds—boom-be-blam-blam—white-faced cows in the moonlight—be-boom-doom—then a flashing De-Ding-dingdingling...



for twenty minutes we watch, but then it all goes to hell. As the train picks up speed, the car goes up a vibration that becomes a steady banging, then a violent slamming, then a bucking and shimmying in which you can't lie, stand, or

it's awful. What we're on, we realize, is a "bad order" car, the kind that creates derailments. Like a rubber hose, the steel floor walls your feet, your side, your hands; it sends you bumping with steady jerks toward the open door. Slim is smoking, lying stoically on his side with his sleeping bag, gutting it out. Recklessly leaning and stumbling around, meanwhile, Beargrease is chain-smoking, lunging here, then there, like a caged tiger. I'm afraid he'll be thrown out the door.

I know Beargrease is taking a pounding, but in no more, I feel the now familiar creep of something weird between us, a veiled, psych-out, male head-butting business. Leaning over me, Beargrease shouts, "HEY," then waits while I dig out the plugs. Then, with mock concern, he yells, "Know what to do in case of ailment?"

Sure, I know. We both know, and as I return to stare, I can hear an inner voice say, *th, you can kiss your sorry ass good-bye, therfucker!*

It's a Mexican standoff. Beargrease laughs. Then, in a bluff, irritable way, I laugh, too. But I'm not just laughing, I'm coughing—I'm suffering what amounts to an asthma attack, hacking and slobbering and sneezing. Maybe the tension is aggravating it. In all this corn and ragweed, my allergies have been on a rampage, and now my constant smoking is making it worse. But of course they know this. They can hear me sneezing, but they won't let up on the cigarettes. So finally I take the plunge: "Hey, think you guys could cool it with the cigarettes for a few minutes? Just till I can get my sinuses together?"

It might as well ask for an easier train. They look at me and laugh. *Fool*, they seem to say. Now they're teaching me a hobo lesson, one that drives far deeper than the usual tussles between smokers and abstainers. This lesson is as different as the rules are different, or utterly absent. Now I've got two strikes against me, and Beargrease and Slim are merciless, their faces glowing red and spiteful, pulsing like neon signs in the darkness, as they fill the car with smoke. Here's your freedom. Lying in that car then with the wheels beating up through the floor, I see the mean-eyed face of this malign, uncracked freedom—

And slam, but you can't sleep. And slam, but when you are sleeping—half-sleeping—with anxiety dreams of falling and all the pointless-

ness and placelessness and rulelessness of that unbridled freedom. And the sky, it never runs dry of darkness, and the train, it never stops. And waking, you see the people beside you are strangers, barely recognizable strangers in a land that refuses to end.

**A**fter four hours of this pounding, the train shudders to a stop. Beargrease is shaking me.

"Come on! We're getting off."

My flashlight has rolled off in the darkness, and my pack has spilled open. "Quick—quick—quick—" Slim is out already. Standing by the open door, wreathed in the smoky blue vapor of the yard lamps, Beargrease is waving at me as I yank on boots and cinch up my pack: "Come on, willya? They didn't break air. They're liable to go any second."

Boots unlaced, I run for it. But when I jump down into the gassy blue darkness, my legs are cramped and wobbling. I feel as if I'm re-entering gravity after a period of prolonged weightlessness.

It's on all of us, this weight. Without a word, we make off, three leaning figures moving under the yard lights, through the clasping undergrowth, into the wide, flat fields beyond. A far wind is moving—a fresh wind is luffing off the horizon, where a pearly dawn light is just beginning to lap. Tremors are still moving up my legs, but the land, the land is firm as we circle in the blowing darkness, each looking for a place to curl up. Nose up, Beargrease thinks it must be North Dakota. Sorta feels like Dakota, he says. Wetter and western. Cooler, maybe.

And when I wake up the next morning, the clouds are gigantic—big, fleecy, rolling clouds, and in the air, after days of heat, I can see my breath. Propped up on my elbows, I suddenly feel very excited. I'm out West, boy, and I don't know where I am, or care.

Beargrease, meanwhile, is sitting a few feet away, smoking. His bag is rolled, and he's coiled like a spring—coiled to go, it seems. But with Slim curled up in that now familiar wounded way, Beargrease knows we ain't going nowhere. That old black dog has got Slim bad.

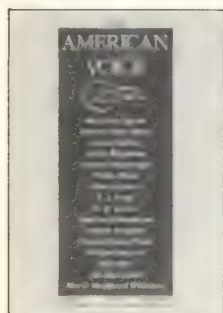
Forget Slim, I think. I don't need Slim spoiling my mood. Rolling over then, I look at the land beyond—soft meadowland ringed with bluish grass and peely white birches with flickering leaves. Then I notice something glowing from a little scrub tree beside me. Off one branch is the amber shell of a cicada, glued itself there while it molts.

A cicada bug. Lying here, I find it surprising how this insect, so long associated with old Judas life to a tree. It's all here in the feelers, even the scratchy little insect is complete in every way.

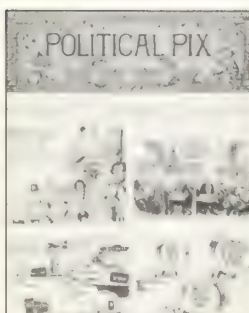
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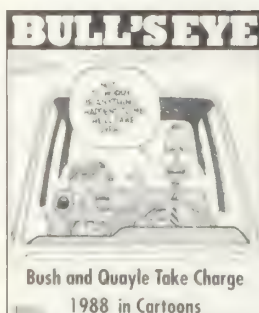
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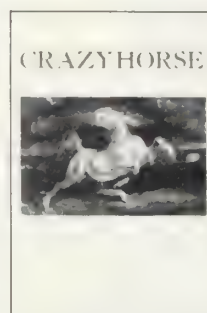
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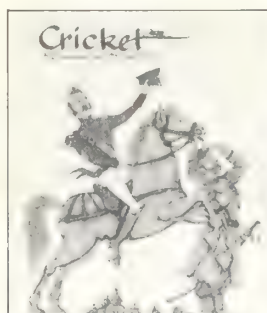
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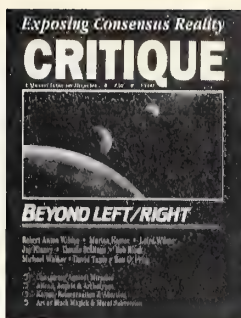
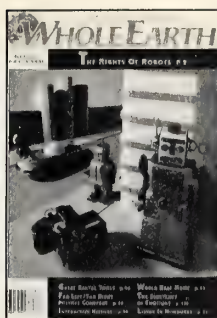


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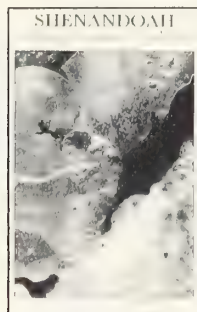
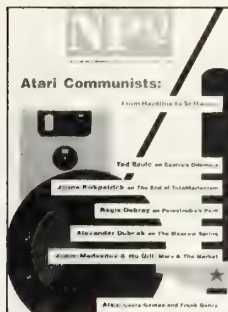


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*Inside  
I'm croaking,  
Look, I'm not  
a toad, I'm a  
prince! A good  
suburbanite,  
see?*

fine rip down the back, where the cicada's new life has torn free. Somewhere out here, waiting out this August, is the cicada who left this brittle husk of himself. While the old *was* life lies tacked here, his living life, the *is*, is out there, now dryly chirring, cut adrift much like old Slim beside me snoring in the sun.

And I think: What happened to you, Slim? Where is your ladybug, and the home that was once, and the children and the sprinkler? Looking at you, I suddenly have an image of musty old cicada suits in a closet. I see army suits and a Sunday suit from that once life, when you were still Master Sergeant Pete Hirska with your once wife and once kids. And watching you then, I imagine how your old, insupportable life suddenly tore open one day, like a billfold in a strong wind, blowing clear from there to this placid hereafter that feels like Dakota.

A few minutes later, as I'm rolling up my bag, Beargrease calls over quietly, "Hey, let's get some breakfast. Just leave Slim. He don't want nothin' now."

Just beyond the little yard, there's a large coffee shop. It's not a bad place—maybe a medium-nice place—but in our present state, it's way too nice for us.

As we walk up, I smear my face on my coat sleeve and tug a comb through my matted hair. But in the mirror inside the doorway, I see it's a lost cause.

Beargrease is not so insecure. The minute we walk in, people are craning around, staring at him. It's not just the nasty-looking shades, I realize, it's the *hat*. Never in public will Beargrease doff the magic hat: Samson knows better than to denude himself of his crowning power. And like any genuinely handsome man, Beargrease naturally assumes that he is always magnetic. Gritty face. Black curls. Through that door, like an infusion, strides a life that feels itself to be as sweeping and grand as any movie.

And possibly Beargrease feels I cramp his style. Once at the counter, he waits till I take a stool, then, cocking his leg like a cowboy, mounts the next stool over.

But Beargrease may have a point, distancing himself from me. Instead of being proud of this well-earned filth I'm wearing, I cravenly resort to middle-classdom. Oh, aren't I polite! So precise and grammatical as our chubby, heavily made-up waitress pulls out her pad. I'm not just ordering coffee and French toast. Inside I'm croaking, *Look, I'm not a toad, I'm a prince! A good suburbanite, see?*

But Beargrease *knows* his gamy power, this lord of the open road. Giving her his order, he leans forward. He uses his eyes and mystique,

asking her faintly fondling questions and trite indulgences. A little more cream? And the biscuits, are they homemade? At every pretense she's buzzing around, coquettishly pouring warm-ups, while I, big, smelly toad, must

Yet apparently I'm not the only one feeling neglected. Again and again, I see men gazing at Beargrease, as if to say, *Just who the hell do you think you are, dirtball?* But grandly, Beargrease ignores them, timid, envious souls. Floating across from us is a heavy, red-faced man dressed in a baggy yellow golf sweater and faded Snead slacks. Sopping up his egg yolk with toast, Beargrease detects the man's disapproving look. The hat flips up. Beargrease's teeth flash.

"Say," he asks, sounding as if he's out to settle a silly wager, "just where are we, anyway? This North Dakota?"

The golfer stares at him. "Why, this is Minnesota," says the man. And then he laughs uneasily, as if to add, *You're a space cowboy. And this is Planet Earth.*

The hotshot isn't your usual freight. It's highballing, top-priority, double-decker train, each car consisting of two compartments the size of semi-trailers, one stacked atop the other. I can't believe the size of it, massively tall, curving into the distance like the Great Wall. Riding on the elevated platform where the ends of two cars abut, high in the open air, I feel I'm atop a giant stagecoach. "The Cadillac," Slim calls it, owing to its smooth, heavy ride.

Within an hour, we're well into North Dakota—flat, flat black-soiled land, darkly lush, vaguely bleak way. I see tumbleweed and patchy grasslands dotted with cattle. Then it's followed by immense yellow fields of nodding black-eyed sunflowers, all facing in the same direction, tracking the westerly path of the sun.

Propped back against his bedroll, Beargrease writes a letter to Poppy, then reads a few pages of James Michener's *Covenant*.

And soon the sky is big with fiery stars, even more massive and penetrating than the stars is the darkness. Into that oceanic darkness the train is roaring. Cascading through the seamy wet darkness, the train is now wedging, bombarding down like a great breaker, roaring into deeper troughs of Dakota.

And all the while the temperature is falling. Within the next hour, it must drop a good fifteen or twenty degrees, not even counting the windchill. But still I'm fine, snoozed down in my sleeping bag under a heavy coat and wool cap, with a belly full of beans. I'm fine until I wake to a crack of thunder, then feel cold water dribbling down my neck.

It's a full-blown western electrical storm. Poking my head out, I see long, white rippling



, crazing and shattering like ice across the  
My bag is getting soaked, but I'll be okay—  
got rain gear. But then, as I'm pulling out  
poncho, I remember that Beargrease has  
ing, not even a plastic sheet. Christ, he's  
even awake! All through this barrage, he's  
snoring away, buried under a heap of soggy  
ling. With the rain splattering across my  
I yell over, "Beargrease! Hey, wake up,  
! You want my poncho? You're gonna get  
ed and freeze!"  
othing! Even huddled under that mess, he  
s me—he must—but Macho Man won't an-  
! And I think, *We could share. We could beat*  
*as comrades, but Hardass here is still out to*  
*2 something!*  
o, it's not the cold I'll die from. Well into  
tana, we both lay there freezing. Freez-  
I think, for nothing but pride! Freezing for  
ing but a vile willfulness that makes me  
helpless, like a helium balloon shooting out  
those black reaches where humanity finally  
explodes from its own insupportable  
arrogance.

**V**e got through that night, of course. And  
trospect, I can't say that Beargrease was out  
ove anything. Very likely, he was just try-

train slowly climbed the Rocky Mountain foot-  
hills, I had a feeling we'd passed a milestone. Or  
that I had, rather.

Certainly there was less tension between  
Beargrease and me. Riding out now, we were al-  
most pals again, joking and snapping pictures as  
the train slowly clacked up the mountainside.  
Even Slim was in better spirits.

And, really, who could be in a bad mood,  
heading into the Rockies on a clear, sunny day?  
Like a cable car, the train labored up the dry,  
gray-humped foothills. And with every few  
hundred feet of elevation the land changed, go-  
ing from knuckled buttes and deserty hills to  
hard blue lakes and meadows spread with flow-  
ers that glowed like dials in the sun.

Was it telling that Slim's black mood had  
suddenly lifted after that freezing night on the  
hotshot? At dawn, as he climbed down, Slim's  
face was red and smushed with the cold, like an  
old winter potato. Swaddled in his sleeping bag,  
Slim walked like a ghost across the tracks, then  
up the embankment, where he said gently, "It's  
nice to stretch a bit, hah, fellas? Well, why  
don't you boys warm up and bring back a little  
coffee while I watch the gear. That'd be mighty  
nice now, a little cuppa coffee."

I remember feeling ashamed then as I stood

*The cold  
and hardships,  
and then the  
wonderful relief  
of having  
endured—this  
for them was  
the marrow  
of life*



o get through a bad night without wasting  
nth fussing.  
was thinking of this two days later as we  
out of Havre, Montana. A major shipping  
er on the Burlington Northern lines, Havre  
main stopover for boes traveling east and  
, and it was there we had jumped off after  
miserable night coming across North Dako-  
And happily, something seemed to have  
ged among us in Havre. That day as our

there eyeing him. Ashamed because my ma-  
was to curse them both for being so stupid  
ride an open car across country side  
perature drops and violent thund  
neither uttered a word of complaint, nor  
any indication that anything uncom-  
pecially terrible had happened  
them, I realized that I was ashamed  
and then the wonder of what they  
dured—this for them was the

What  
the hobo  
shows is that,  
know it or not,  
we all swim  
in the same  
unquiet sea

The collision, not the avoidance.

Why did I fight this? I wondered. Where for days I had bucked the hard saddle of this life, Slim didn't fight it. When we returned with his coffee, he was still huddled beneath the bushes, his breath wreathing the branches like a spider-web white with dew. *A little cup of hot coffee.* As he took that cup, he was beaming. It was as if the cold had temporarily purged him of his demons. The old man was happier than I'd ever seen him.

I think of those mountains now as I try to make sense out of what Slim and Beargrease taught me. Besides crossing the Rockies, I passed another divide somewhere along the way. Somewhere I also passed the Great Divide of Innocence.

I know it sounds strange for a man my age to speak of innocence. Yet unwelcome as it is to feel like a virgin before unprecedented experience, it's even more disorienting to have this dual, forking sense of an innocence that has been mixed with a little experience—enough, anyway, to see how confused you still are, and how naive you were to start with.

And there was another old, rather unwelcome lesson I was relearning as we climbed the Rockies. This was the realization that one must never be too shocked at what life can dish out.

Toward the end, indeed, I was learning to rather like the hobo's rough freedom. In a fool's way, I was even feeling a bit cocky, as we ran from car to car, playing that shell game, Fool the Bull. But I was also learning not to be so shocked by a life that bears little resemblance to what it was, say, during the Depression, when it was common for hoboes to go door-knocking, offering to work in return for a bite to eat. I saw this the day before in Havre while hiding in the brush with our gear while Beargrease went up the line to suss things out.

The yard was filled with boes. In the scrub oaks to my right was a pack of young dudes who had ridden in that afternoon. Real dangerous-looking zipper-heads, too, one vaguely Indian-looking and four others in heavy-metal dress dragging a cowering, malnourished dog. Gangway for the New Generation. Here we were in an area plainly at severe risk of wildfire, and they're out scrounging wood for a fire. Burn the fucker down, they didn't care.

Then came a crack in the brush behind me. Emerging from the trees, a big, fat boe with a red, sousy-looking face called over: "Hey, man, you oughta come in here with us. That young bull, he's bad news. He's gonna git ya there. I'd come over here, I was you."

Smoke was already curling through the trees as I thanked him and told him I had to wait on

my partner. Twenty minutes later, while there wondering when my pyro neighbors going to put Havre on the CBS *Evening News*, Beargrease returned. So did the fat boe, loudly renewed his offer.

Did I suppose we were being invited for a tails? "Well," I said, looking at Beargrease, "game if you are."

But here I was being crazy. "No thanks, man," said Beargrease with a curt nod to the boe. Shooting me a look, he started off. The once we were out of earshot, he chewed me out. "Don't you ever fall for some line like that, Man, he could have had a damned army back that mess. They wouldn't find you till you're stinking!"

So here was another milestone past the town of Innocence. The night before that, the hotshot blasting across North Dakota, I'd still been laboring under the misconception that hobo life was a kind of rough comradeship. When Beargrease spurned that boe's offer, I suddenly understood why all the boes we'd seen been so spooky, skulking by like deer in the season. No, the fellowship of the fabled old hobo is gone, pretty much.

Sure, there are still the good, working hobo, especially your itinerant pickers, but theirs is an endangered species in a trip-wire world increasingly inhabited by criminals, winos, megalomaniacs, and others running, stomped, or flushed down our social septic system. And really, where can a man or woman run anymore? One day, a man or woman may flee debts, alimony, and even justice, but not even the hobo can escape the times we live in. What the hobo shows us is that, know it or not, we all swim in the same unquiet sea.

I didn't want to admit it, but I'd had enough of this endless riding and waiting and sleeplessness.

As we climbed into the Rockies, what I was most counting on was the two- or three-day rest we had promised ourselves in Whitefish, Montana. Anticipating this, Beargrease and I were in great spirits as our train slowly snaked through the mountains into Glacier National Park. Slim, as usual, was off by himself, leaving Beargrease and me a few cars behind, taking pictures when—"Oh, wow!"—Beargrease turned to point and accidentally knocked the camera from my hands. Down it clattered, under the wheels.

I felt so bad for him as he eyed me tight. "Look," I said. "Don't worry about it."

But much as I tried to downplay it, he still looked terrible. "Listen," he insisted, "we can go back tomorrow. I'll bet we can call the ranger on something. We really might find it."



We both knew it was gone, but then it wasn't the camera we were squaring away. With trip drawing to a close, this mutual show of cern was perhaps a veiled way of making nds. Even so, when the train briefly stopped ng the river, Beargrease jumped off, saying, ok, I'm gonna check on Slim. I'll see you in itefish, okay? It ain't far now."

Several hours later, as the train pulled up to depot, I had all the gear together. But where e they? Anxiously, I looked on both sides of train. I even jumped down and peered under wheels, looking for legs. Had we somehow en our signals crossed? Or were they just ing until the train pulled farther down the l?

I jumped back on as the train started. And r, with a sick feeling, I realized we were rap- picking up speed, heading out of town.

"Beargrease!" I was craning over the side, ing down a curving wall of cars. "Heyyyy—" ven if they were on board, they couldn't e me in that racket. Worse, it was growing ler. And perceptibly darker, with that early m of high mountains.

"IDIOTS!" I screamed.

"Whoom. I was swallowed in the pounding kness of a tunnel filled with diesel fumes. unately, Slim had prepared me for the tun- . Hitting the deck to get under the fumes, I n in my handkerchief, then slowly breathed ough it.

ight! Air again! Then, *whoom*—more dark- . A short tunnel, then another shorty, fol- ed by one that was starting to worry me n the train finally flew out the other side of mountain.

ut still we were climbing, and it was growing dily colder. Terrible as Beargrease felt about camera, I now felt at the sight of his gear, then maybe I'd learned something these past days. Like a scavenger yanking off a dead i's boots, I pulled open his pack. I took out food, unrolled his sleeping bag, then stuffed nd his clothes under me and began stuffing face. In fact, as I sat there chewing, I thought Beargrease would have been rather proud of me.

**B**eargrease!"  
Man!"

lours later the train had stopped high in the ntains, and it was freezing. Waking up, I Beargrease's sooty face shining in the moon- t as he climbed up.

Damn," he puffed. "I been with Slim. Five up—" Beargrease paused to catch his ith. "After I left you, we opened up one of compartments. Crawled in out of the wind. ss we flat missed Whitefish, huh?"



It was past midnight when we finally reached Spokane, and we split up there. Beargrease said he was going right back to Whitefish. Slim was bagging it and heading home to Seattle.

"Now, look," said Slim. "You can go with Grease or you can come with me. Or you can stay here."

I thanked them, but after riding for sixteen hours straight, I'd had it. With that, we shook hands and parted. I wound up sleeping in the deserted lobby of Spokane's little airport, which had closed for the night. There in the men's room, I washed as best I could and put on a moderately clean shirt, but I was still looking pretty grubby the next morning as I waited for my flight.

Stuck between worlds. That was the feeling I had. No, I hadn't gone native, but in my blurred vision my world suddenly looked rather strange. From time to time in my exhaustion, I found myself staring as through a glass at all these confident, well-dressed people. My people. People moving in great schools through the channels of a powerful life.

But more disorienting was my feeling on the jet later as I watched the land slip by. Peering out that bubble of plexiglass, I couldn't grasp it, the immensity of those hard miles gliding so effortlessly beneath the polished fuselage of this life of mine. And not just the miles but those same mountains I had passed through only hours before. Odd. Suddenly, those mountains made me think of those alpine cloisters where penitents renounce the world only to spend their lives praying for it.

Prayer takes many forms—kneeling, walk- ing—maybe even rail-riding. Yet how odd, when you think of it, that strangers should pray for us. Or, for that matter, that grandiose characters like Slim and Beargrease might somehow fancy themselves as being free for us.

I don't know who's right. I can't say who's really free, or more free, much less what free- dom means in an increasingly confused, root- bound world that has somehow lost faith in the very myths it feeds on. But picture this: a train. And there by the door, a scruffy man waving at you. Then ask yourself, Is the man waving h- lo? Or is he waving good-bye?

Myself, I see a vanishing man, a tough- man with little respect for my life or a- see a man who rejects my life bo- seems much too costly for what it's worth who rejects it, above all, because for all its co- and relative safety, it strikes him- free. I see a man traveling in car- but still putting down tracks. Tho- I guess. Same old foot. But now pri- prints.

*How odd  
that grandiose  
characters like  
Slim and  
Beargrease  
might somehow  
fancy themselves  
as being free  
for us*

## SCHEHERAZADE

By Charles Baxter

She leaned down to adjust his respirator tube and the elastic tie around his neck that kept it in place. "Don't," he said, an all-purpose warning referring to nothing in particular, and she heard Muzak from down the hall, a version of "Stardust" that made her think of cold soup. A puddle outside his window reflected blue sky and gave the ceiling of his room a faint blue tint.

He was looking sallow and breathing poorly; she would have to lie again to perk him up.

"Do you remember," she said, sitting in the chair next to his chair, "my goodness, this would have been fifty years ago, that trip we made to Hawaii?"

"Don't remember it," he said. "Don't think I've been there."

"Yes, you have," she said, patting his hand where the wedding ring was. "We took the train, it had 'Zephyr' in its name somewhere, one of those silver trains that served veal for dinner. We had a romantic night in the Pullman car; I expect you don't remember that."

"Not just now," he said.

"Well, we did. We took it to Oakland or San Francisco, I forget which, and from there we took the boat to Honolulu."

*(Charles Baxter's most recent book is First Light, a novel.)*

"What boat? I don't remember a boat. Did it have a name?"

She leaned back and stared at the ceiling. Why did he always insist on the names? She couldn't invent names; that always caused her trouble. And her bifocals were hurting her. She would have to see that nice Dr. Hauser about them. "The name of the ship, dear, was *Halcyon Days*, not very original, I must say; we were on the C deck, second-class. The first night out you were seasick. Then you were all right. The ship had an orchestra and we danced the fox-trot. You flirted with that woman whose room was down the hall. You were quite awful about it."

The outline of a smile appeared on his face. "Who?"

She saw the smile and was pleased. "I don't remember," she said. "Why should I remember her name? She was just a silly woman with vulgar dark-red hair. She let it fly all over her shoulders."

"What was her name?"

"I told you I don't remember."

"Please," he said. His mouth was open. His filmy eyes looked in her direction.

"All right," she said. "Her name was Peggy."

"Peggy," he said, briefly sighing.

"Yes, Peggy," she said, "and you made yourself quite ridiculous around her, but I think she liked you, and I

remember I once caught you twining the railing, looking at the water as the Pacific go by as the ship chugged westward."

"Was I bad?"

"You were all right, dear. You were just like any man. I didn't mind. I am like that. You bought her drinks."

"What did she drink?"

"Old-fashioned," she said. "An odd drink for a single woman to order. I would have thought she might prefer martinis or Manhattans or gin and tonics. But no. She liked bourbon mixed with sugar water and bitters. She felt herself going too far in improvisation and hauled herself back in. "What I minded was that you would not always close the door to the stateroom. You would look in, and there she was."

"Yes," he said. "There she was."

"There she was," she continued, "in her bathrobe, or worse, with that terrible red hair of hers billowing down to her shoulders. In her white bathrobe, and you, standing in the hallway like any man, staring at her."

"You caught me."

"Yes, I did, but I didn't blame you. You were attractive to women."

"I was?"

"Yes, you were. You were so handsome in those days, and so witty, and when you sat down at the piano and sang those Cole Porter tunes, it was hard for women to resist. Blanch-



ts. That's what they call them. blandishments."

Could I play the piano?" He was ing, perhaps thinking of the Pa-, or Peggy.

Very well, dear. You could play sing. Though I've heard better, I certainly heard worse. You sang e. You'd sing to anybody."

To Peggy?"  
To anyone," she said. When she his smile fade, she said, "And to too. In an effort to charm.

sang 'You're the Top.' I say she liked it. Who knows t trouble you two got into? I not a spy. All I know now 's been over fifty years."

e closed his eyes and ched his thin legs. She saw ile cross his face again and pleased with herself.

n Hawaii," she said, "we ed at the Royal Palm Ho-

Although she had once a on a ship, she had never a in Hawaii and was speak- nore slowly now as she tried e the scene. "It was on the h, the famous one with the ie, and the sands were e, as white as alabaster. We ed shuffleboard."

remember that," he said. Good. We drove around the d and climbed the extinct ano, Mount Johnson. re's a lake inside Mount son, and you went swim- g in it, and there were large s, enormous blue birds, g over our heads, and you d them the archangel birds said that God had sent them to us sign."

A sign of what?"  
A sign of our happiness."  
Were we happy?"  
Yes," she said. "We were."  
Always?"

t seems so to me now. Anyway, int Johnson was one day, and on her day we went diving for pearls. found an oyster with a pearl in it. I wear it on a pin."

e looked over at her and searched ace and chest and arms.

ust not today," she said. "I'm not ing it today."

he sound of the oxygen hissing

out of the respirator tube fatigued her. She would not be able to continue this much longer. It was like combat of a subtle kind. She hurried on. "On the island we picked enormous flow- ers, and every evening we sat down for dinner by the water, and you put a gardenia in my hair one night. We ate pineapples and broke open coconuts, and at moonrise the sea breezes came in through the window of our room where we were lying on the bed. We

"It came in through the window," he whispered.

"From where?"

"From the sea."

"I don't remember it," she said. "What sort of sound was it?"

"A note."

"A musical note?"

"A note like this," he said. Then he made a terrible noise from his throat and his mouth.

"I don't remember it. Oh yes," she



were so in love. We had room service bring us champagne and you read poetry to me."

"Yes," he said. "What did you look like?"

She clasped her hands in her lap. "I was beautiful." She paused. "You said so."

"The sound," he said.

"What sound?"

"There was a sound."

"I don't remember a sound," she said.

"There was one," he insisted.

"Where?"

"In the room."

"Yes?"

said suddenly, inspired. "There was an orchestra right outside our win- dow, and one night I heard a light long, violins, violin," she said, briefly, wept, and then she said, "I don't remember it. Oh yes," she

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### NOTES FOR "INSE(R)TS"

ACROSS: 1. DEATH, hidden; 5. SPAM, reversal; 9. EMS; 11. TUT, hidden; 12. WAN(d); 13. TAILER, anagram; 14. S(TEA)M; 15. BOWS, two meanings; 16. EON, anagram; 19. LASE, hidden; 21. REVE(reversal)-T; 22. PAL(a-table); 24. GE(orgia)NS; 25. MARS(h); 27. REGAN, anagram; 29. MI-. . .D; 30. SETTER, two meanings; 32. BEN(edict); 35. H-IE; 36. YEMEN, anagram; 37. E(XERT), reversal of "rex" replacing "gyp"; 38. D(. . .)RAM; 39. RUT(h); 40. . . .T-EASES. DOWN: 1. D. . .-O(WE)R; 2. AIR, "heir"; 3. (c)RUE(l); 4. HE-RITAGE (anagram); 5. STALE-MATE; 6. PAR(amount); 7. S-E-W-S; 8. MOREL, hidden; 10. STIRS, two meanings; 17. BE(L)UES; 19. OVERLA(P. . .)S, anagram; 20. PA-T; 22. PANTERS, anagram; 23. PERIL, hidden; 24. G(ABLE)R; 26. SC(R)AMS; 28. AS(he)-SET; 31. (P)L(A)(n)E(r); 33. NET, reversal; 34. ROE, "row".

SOLUTION TO MAY DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 77). (ROY) BLOUNT: WHAT MEN DON'T TELL WOMEN. America is in a sober period. . . Famous people do sit-ups. . . rather than raise hell. . . It got to the point, I guess, that the only forbidden thing left were things that only a complete damn fool would do, but does that mean we have to put our energy into aerobics?

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 78, Harper's Magazine, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to Harper's, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by June 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one year subscription to Harper's Magazine. The solution will be printed in the July issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 76 are W. M. George, Erlanger, Kentucky; Bob Pace, Knoxville, Tennessee; and Sharyn A. Endow, Durham, North Carolina.

"That's a toghorn. That's the so you're making."

"We were never in Hawaii."

"Yes, we were. You just don't member. Oh yes. I remember sound now. It was a siren, from do town Honolulu."

"No," he said. "From the sea."

"How can you be sure?"

Suddenly he turned toward her looked directly at her. "I hear it no he said. "I hear it right this minu

"You poor dear," she said, whis ing. "Think of Hawaii."

"I will. Do you hear it?"

"What?"

"The sound."

"No."

"Listen."

She sat listening. The Muzak f the hallway had fallen silent. F outside there was a faint, low h ming.

"I hear it?"

"Yes," she said faintly.

"I heard it first there."

"So did I."

"I feel a little better," he said feel sleepy."

"Go to sleep, dear," she s "Take a little nap."

"You'll be back?"

"Yes, tomorrow."

"Where else did we go?"

"We went," she said, "to Eg where we crawled through the p mids. We went through the fjord Norway. We saw wonders. We many wonders."

"Tell me tomorrow."

"I will." She kissed him on the head, stood up, and walked to doorway. She looked back at him seemed to be about to fall asleep, he also seemed to be listening to sound. She gazed at him for a ment, and then went down the h way, past the nurses, bowing her h for a moment before she went out front door to the bus stop. She thinking of tomorrow's story; would say that they had traveled Argentina—but what did people there besides speak Spanish? Perhaps they had gardens. Why not the large garden, the Garden of Branches? Twigs—it sounded better in Spanish—still, after all these years, despite the vandals, geometrical intact?



# TOO MUCH, TOO BLINDLY, TOO FAST

The hunger in Manhattan life  
By Edward Hoagland

Most of us realized early that we are not our "broth-keeper." Yet perhaps we came to recognize that we are but for the grace of God. If the jitters we experienced on a particularly awful noon were extended and prolonged until we didn't shake them off, after drastic months we might end up sleeping on the sidewalk too. Character is fate, we like to say: hard work and fidelity (or call it regularity) will carry the day. And this is just not enough to believe. But chemistry is also fate: the chemistry of our tissues and the chemistry of our brains. We know that just as some people among us get cancer at a pitifully young age, others go haywire through no fault of their ethics, logic, or upbringing.

Still, what do most of us do when we notice a hungry, disoriented person lumped on the street in obvious despair? Why, we pass quickly by,

Edward Hoagland's essay about suicide appeared in the March 1988 issue of Harper's magazine. Heart's Desire, a collection of his essays written over the past twenty years, was recently published by Summit.



averting our eyes toward an advertisement, the stream of taxis, the window dressing in a shop. Part of the excitement of a great metropolis is how it juxtaposes: starvelings blowing on their fingers in front of Bergdorf Goodman, Saks, and Lord & Taylor; urchins shilling for a three-card monte pitchman alongside a string of smoked-glass limousines; old people coughing, freezing next to a restaurant where young professionals are licking sherbet from their spoons to clear their palates.

Already in the eighteenth century Tom Paine wrote that in New York City "the contrast of affluence and wretchedness is like dead and living bodies chained together." Or as is said nowadays: Takes all kinds.

Those hungry people foraging in garbage cans apparently didn't start a Keogh plan or get themselves enrolled in some corporation's pension program thirty years ago and stick to the job. They didn't "get a degree" when they were young; they were uncertain in direction, indecisive about money; they plotted their course badly or slipped out of gear some-

where alone. They were simply hungry.

There is a sense of the city as a place where people are lost, where they are looking for something, where they are trying to find their way.

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with who, in reasonably comfortable, well-stocked apartments, may nonetheless be drinking themselves to death. Yet what might we do about those on the street? Empty our wallets and rush to a money machine for more cash to give out? Run for office on a philanthropic platform? Become social workers? Move to the country and forget it all? "New York is getting unlivable," people say. An adage among the privileged is that "you can't live in New York on less than \$150,000" (a year). But if this isn't swinishness talking, the real meaning is that it costs that much not to be in the city—to be elevated above the fracas, grief, and dolor of the streets, with sufficient "door-man" protection to shield you from the dangers there, to exclude anyone with a lesser income, and to conceal from you the fact that a city is its streets. A city is its museums too, but here in New York Goya is in the streets more than in the museums.

Our ancestral wish as predators is that somebody be worse off than we are—that we see subordinates, surplus prey, or rivals hungering. This assures us we're prospering. Rather in the same way that we dash sauces on our meat (Worcestershire, horseradish, A. L., or béarnaise) to restore a tartness approximating the taint of spoilage that wild meat attains, we want a city with a certain soupçon of visible misfortune, some people garishly on the skids, scouting in the gutter for a butt and needing to be "moved on" (the policeman's billy club for banging on their shoes if they fall asleep on a park bench). In a major city, in other words, there should be store detectives collaring shoplifters while we finger our credit cards, white-haired men being bullied by mid-level executives younger than they are or being forced to hustle around the subway system as messengers, occasional young women selling themselves and suffering exhibitionists publicly going mad. That quick-footed, old-eyed gentleman with the wife in a lynx coat, grabbing a cab on Sixth Avenue to go uptown after a gala evening, leaves behind an old Purple Heart soldier with his broken leg in a cast,

scrambling for a tip, who may sleep on a grating tonight in the icy cold. *You're sick? You have no co-op to go to? No CDs, T-bills, mutual funds? Where've you been?*

A city is supposed to be a little bit cruel. What's the point of "making it" at all if the servants in hotels and restaurants aren't required to act like automatons, and if plenty of people at your own place of business don't have to bootlick and brownnose? A city with its honking traffic jams, stifling air, and brutal cliffs of glass and stone is supposed to watch you enigmatically, whether you are living on veal *médallions* and poached salmon or begged coins and hot dogs. But stumble badly and it will masticate you. Sing a song and exhibit your sores on the subway and it will nickel-and-dime you as you gradually starve.

**A**ll this Dickensian tough stuff, however, has often verged on the playful in American myth, because in the past it has been tied in with rags-to-riches stories. The ragamuffin enshrouded in burlap, sleeping underneath a bush at the edge of the park, might be a new immigrant who in another seven years would grab his first million in the garment trade. He has links to the Statue of Liberty, to put it bluntly, so don't be a fool and dismiss him glibly. Ben Franklin entered Philadelphia that first time to make his name with one "Dutch dollar" to live on.

Or he might be a hobo, riding the rods for freedom and fun, a hero of folk songs and such, whose worst sin was stealing Mom's apple pie as it cooled on the kitchen porch and a chicken from the dooryard for his "jungle" stew. He might be a labor organizer traveling on the q.t. Or if the figure asleep in the park was female, she might be Little Orphan Annie, soon to charm Daddy Warbucks and be spruced up by him.

And in hard, bad times like the Depression, the Arkie and Okie families hitting the open road for a chance at a better life—one of the most hallowed American rites—were, let's be frank about this, white. For many urbanites, what makes the heart pound at being surrounded by street people is

that a preponderance of them be black. Also, when those dishearted farmers from the Dust Bowl indulged in what is lately called "substance abuse," hey, they were just wide drunks. We all knew what getting three sheets to the wind (and hangover) was like. There was nothing arcane, explosively mblatting about liquor anyhow, even during Prohibition. Hillbillies ("Legs" Diamond) smuggled it into town, not "Colombian drug lord." Besides, during the Depression we were all in a mess together.

Then we pulled together to win World War II. And the veterans came back, as from previous wars and had to start over. Even ten years after 1945 it was easy for a white to hitchhike anywhere—just cut out your thumb. And you probably remember how "the best thing free are free"? This happy slogan sometimes said tongue in cheek, seldom cynically. Religious freedom, for example, surely was free, and light and open spaces where children were free, falling in love was the next thing to free, friendship wasn't necessarily "unworking." Movie idols played happy-go-lucky roles, with the good guys the poor guys a lot. Every middle-class person in the city was stitched into the disciplines of telephone answering machine, exercise club, and psychotherapy. People let the phone ring, let a call come by once in a while, and waded between business appointments when they could. They were keyed nearly to computer tenfold fax speed.

What has also happened in New York is that we no longer assume, like most people—that stranger in not a cause for alarm, may be worth a second glance or tarrying over in the old neighborhoods of mixed races comes, one's tribal affiliation is not just mercenary. All kinds of contractors operated to populate the planet and the people living in it didn't appear as if they could raise (or at least raise) a loan of a certain sum. No stores too, when rents weren't too high, could be handed down from father to son, acquiring a "mystical" or no-cash-flow look. The almighty



ur, where spoken of irreverently, not.

it now when we take note of le on the sidewalk, we flee on them, dodging by as if the hu- shape had become adversarial. along with the dusty shops and y spoons and rent-stabilized lings with a quirky variety of nts has gone the idea that the tering of bums one used to see familiar characters. There on corner by the subway steps each ning stood "Buffalo Bill," "Gro- Cleveland," "V. I. Lenin," or gi Berra" to contribute to—not ncampment of war-zone refugees ing for space on a steam grating, er a scrap of carpeting, or in a carton. Statistically, New York more crowded when it was less ent. People merely had homes. ne discovery that you could l dwellings taller and taller or air rights above a building was when the Indians discovered they could sell land: and then it gone. Sunlight, like falling in and raising children conscient- ly, has become expensive, and the money pressure unrelenting e have no *downtime*," as a friend is doing okay expressed it), the ant malevolence of racism in- ses, as well as a general sense of uise and deterioration or immi- menace. A man with his head laged says at a party, "I was on way to work and half the world ed to be standing around on the form, including a Guardian An- while those creeps were beating but for a minute I had this ludi- s feeling that I was about to

ome days the ills of the city seem mal and mental, a delirium of s and dysfunctions, a souring in gut like dysentery. The creeds or laboratory that ought to invigorate rem exhausted, whether derived Marx, Freud, or capitalism vly perverse). Nationalism as dlistm reached its nadir with the papse of the Axis powers, and has carried our own country far since eea. Judaism has bent itself awry ne conflicted Middle East; Chris- tity hasn't been tried in years (ybe since Gandhi). "Tell it to

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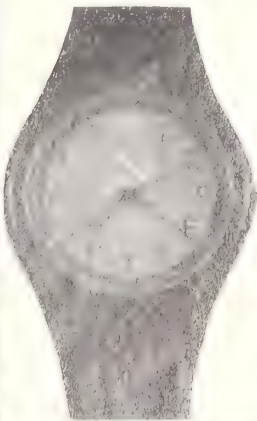
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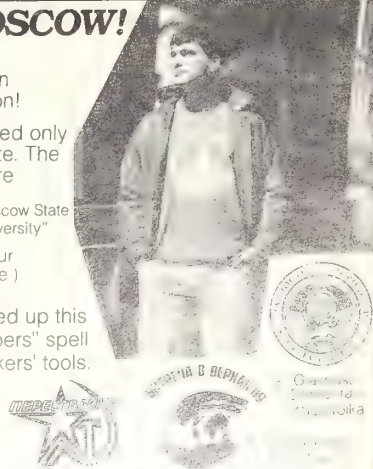
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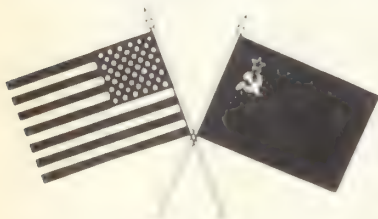
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the Marines!" one of the elder statesmen of finance hurrying to lunch might want to tell the sad-sack young blacks wanting a coin on Fifty-first Street, but some of them have already been in the Marines. The fact that the city's former economic base of muscular industries like transport and manufacturing has been supplanted by an employment pattern of money-processing and "information" jobs—electronic paper-pushing—has made it a city of myriad keypunchers, legal assistants, and market researchers: the suddenly rich, the high-flying strivers who live by their wits and their countless clerks, and a piggishness to suit. The leavening of physical work that was present before brought more good humor, loosened the effect of so many people whose bread and butter is their nerves.

I remember trolley cars, and business deals clinched with a handshake, New Yorkers who knew the night sky's constellations, and how easy it was to raise a thumb, catch a ride, and reach Arizona on ten bucks. I can't claim this made it a golden age or even that the city's faces were much happier then. Needless to say, I see lovers now too, and businesspeople alive to their work, and immigrants thick in speech but alight with hopes. High is handsome and fast is fun, not just brutal. No other world city has such a bounce; is dreamed about from so very far off. A "mecca," we say, still almost a religion, and a fine hotbed in which to be young. And that it has curdled doesn't mean it's not still so rich that you could choke.

"But they're so ruthless," several of my middle-aged friends suggest, speaking of the new professionals sprinting as they start. I don't know. Planes are more ruthless than cars, but more gleeful as well, as long as they don't burn up travel itself. I love planes, arriving out of the heavens at strange locations and picking up instant friendships, easy come, easy go. Or call them battlefield alliances, if you prefer. Anyway, that's the style of the day. Look at your watch, pat your passport, and ex-

pand upon conversations you had last evening in a different city, at a different time zone, with some of these people won't ever know.

We New Yorkers, rushing to keep up with our calendars, pausing to open a fast-food package and finding the plastic wrapper resists our fingers, immediately, unthinkingly, move it up to our teeth. Wild we are, but possessed by velocities so fast to stay abreast of ourselves, strewing empathy and social responsibility behind us as we go.

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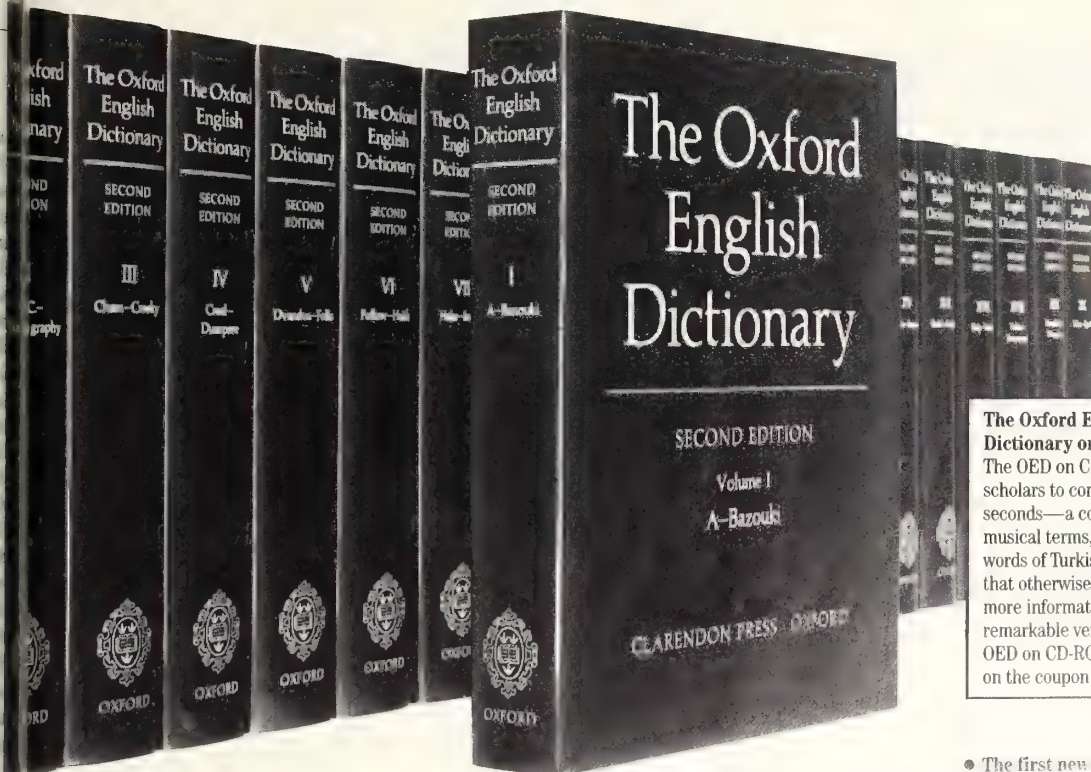
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# MY SUMMER SWING

On the road with a Fifties big band

By Don Asher

**I**n the summer of 1951, I joined the hard-drinking ten-piece Alvie Drake band out of Providence, Rhode Island, for an eight-week tour. I played piano and there were eleven pieces in all if you counted Alvie, for which there was small justification. Alvie played a kind of tin-soldier trumpet, achieving a tone that our lead trumpet player, Val Catalona, described as having the "carrying power of a bird fart in a Minnesota blizzard."

The band was billed as Alvie Drake and His Rhythm Ducks, the inspiration of Alvie's wife, Estelle, who sang and banged the claves on the wrong beat during Latin tunes. Our transportation was a Buick station wagon and a hearse Alvie bought at auction and converted to a six-seat van with a storage well for instruments. The tour got off to a shaky start. Alvie's agency had booked us on a Saturday night, eight to midnight, into a ballroom in—we thought—Barrington, Rhode Island. The booker saw Mitch, our bass player, and me, and drummer Tubbo Winslow in a coffee shop at three that afternoon and said, "Jesus, haven't you guys started yet?"

"For an eight o'clock gig?" Tubbo said. "It's less than an hour's drive."

"An hour to *where*?" The booker looked apoplectic, breathing through his nose like a trapped animal.

*Don Asher is a jazz pianist and novelist. He is the author of *Raise Up off Me: A Portrait of Hampton Hawes*. His most recent book, *Angel on My Shoulder*, was published by Capra Press.*



"Aren't we playing Barrington?" Tubbo asked in a plaintive tone.

"You're at the Princess Ballroom in Great Barrington, Massachusetts!" the booker exploded.

We got Alvie out of the steam room at his club, and half of us were on the road with most of the equipment by quarter to four. The others would follow with Alvie and Estelle in the Buick as soon as Chickie D'Alessandro, our trombonist and band manager, could round them up.

By the time the six of us had set up and were playing the theme opener—"Can't We Be Friends?"—over half the tickets had been refunded. The rest of the band arrived an hour later. By midnight only two couples were left on the floor, one falling-down drunk as in a Thirties dance marathon. Val put a lugubrious capper on the evening, braying "Taps" over our sign-off, "Sleepy Time Gal." Alvie was too depressed to give him more than a glum look. The ballroom manager beckoned Alvie to the office, where a dismal accommodation was reached for the abortive evening.

On the road I roomed with Val. In

those days band members had to pay their own room and board, so we doubled and tripled up to save money. Val had grown up in Fall River, Massachusetts. He had been a varsity track star at the 220-yard low hurdle high school, and was well known by an aging coterie of sports fans in that melancholy town as the Fall River Flash. There was a shadowy, childlike marriage somewhere in his past.

He was a crossword-puzzle nut and a prodigious juicer, addicted to I. Harper bourbon. After the fourth or fifth drink, his color would turn a deep red. "Val's got his Florida tan eating Chickie noted when Val rejoined the band—this was his third time around with Alvie—in early July. I had heard of him on small-combo records: a lively player with a fat, exuberant tone. Alvie, half-aware of his own musical shortcomings, valued him, as did the rest of the band. If there was a distinctive timbre and drive to the band, Val supplied it more than anyone. "Come to have someone back who uses his lungs," Alvie said early in the tour, clapping him on the back, putting aside recollections of past besotted nights. And when Val stood by the kneed on the stage's upper tier, declaring one of his soaring choruses, his broad-bore plangent sound ringing like a carillon, Purvis Honeycutt, a strange, wiggly nineteen-year-old reed player, would twist around, grinning crazily at him, pure joy dancing in his eyes, and scream in a piercing falsetto, "Catalona on a clearrrr day!"

Val's relationship with Alvie



complex. If Val had a bad cold as juicing too heavily, Alvie'd call numbers that stretched out; it occurred too often to be intentional. Val acknowledged the engine, considered it a rightful wing down of the gauntlet, and he to rise to the occasion. "Rise to it," he'd say, "and if need be, go right in." On our best nights, with Valing the brass and Tubbo goosing rhythm, Chickie liked to say, "We can swing Cincinnati into the sea."

What this place needs is a couple of punkahs," Val said as we set up in the sweltering hall in Troy, New York, for a convention of automotive-dealers. He was always studying his conversation with crossword-specialists, studying the faces of clients for comprehension. If he was in a good mood—a receptive mood, the band swinging, maybe a customer out front who had eyes for him—he'd raise his bourbon on the house to me during the break and say, "Thanks to us, man, nothing but green ahead." And at the end of the job, when we started packing up, Val's victory was invariably, "That's it, the nonce."

The automotive people began to fill their places at the long rows of elegantly clothed tables. Two couples filled the floor for our opening medley. When it was over, a man whose crumpled jacket hung a half-foot shy of his knees moseyed up to the bandstand and said with a disarming smile, "I'll play something you rehearsed." I'd heard the earmarks of a long night. After dinner there was an extended break for speeches. Most of us adjourned to a bar across the street. As the last speaker concluded, Chickie came to collect us. A lot of rounds had been down in the hour-long intermission.

Val was the last to show, wandering in from the wings grinning broadly, carrying his horn and a bottle of Pepsi-Cola. The Pepsi, I knew, had been one-third drunk or decanted and topped off with I. W. Harper from the horn case. Alvie allowed soft drinks on the stand on warm nights—Val wasn't yet hip to the topping-off business—and tonight qualified. Estelle's face had a shine to it like moon-

light on a dead butterfish, and swatches of damp ringed the boards around Tubbo's drum set.

Alvie saw something in Val's grin he didn't like, so he called "Our Love Is Here to Stay," which featured him. Val sauntered to center stage with his horn and derby mute and announced extempore over the mike, "And now a venerable oldie from the prolific pen of George Gershwin and his lovely sister Ira..." The gambit fell like a cement kite. During Val's second chorus he hit a couple of uncharacteristic clinkers, and when he returned to his chair to sparse applause, Shorty Beauregard, our arranger/reed player and wizard reader ("That Shorty," Purvis avowed, "can read fly shit off a screen door"), solemnly passed him a Rolaid from the pack he kept in his shirt pocket.

An enormous perspiring man in a seersucker suit began pounding the stage with his fist. "Pick it up, pick it up! You're not working a wake. Play 'Pennsylvania Polka!'" Alvie drew a cease-fire across his throat, throttling Gershwin, and signaled Tubbo to lay down a polka beat. The fat man seized Estelle's arm, pulled her off the two-foot-high stage, and even as she shook her head vehemently no, proceeded to whirl her around the floor with that astonishing sureness and agility some fat men have. A confusion of emotions swarmed across Alvie's sweating face as he watched his slender bride, nineteen years his junior, spinning helplessly in a vast maw of damp seersucker. "Play a couple more!" the fat man bellowed when we finished. Estelle broke from his grasp and fled, tripping up the side stairs in her tight sheath, sinking into her chair and fanning herself with a tambourine. We followed with "Beer Barrel" and "Rain Rain." The tireless couples—ties pulled askew, mascara melting—kept clamoring for more as they cantered around the floor, loosing hoots and strangled animal cries.

At 12:58 A.M. our bow ties began to come off even before the last strains of "Sleepy Time Gal" had faded. I put my charts in order, watching Alvie slump in his chair, the worn, flushed, almost handsome face sweat-bathed under the yellow stage lights. I noticed for the first time how deep-

ly the permanent half-moon was grooved into his upper lip from fifteen years' big-band blowing. Catching my eye, he lazily raised the nearly empty Pepsi bottle toward me. "Know what I'd rather be doing than this, man? Selling neckties on a street corner in Jackass Flats, Idaho, during a blinding snowstorm."

In Utica, New York, Chickie despondently watched the straggling admissions to the tarnished, once-ornate ballroom. "A couple more nights like this, we'll be eating the berries off the wallpaper."

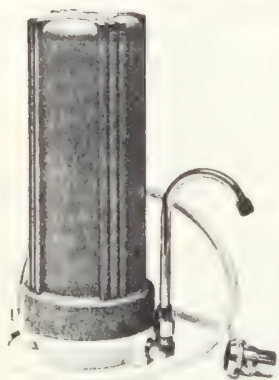
A girl on the floor was interested in Val. An eighteen- or nineteen-year-old raven-haired looker with vermilion lips and wide green eyes. She kept shyly batting her eyelashes at him over the shoulder of her date, whom she continually maneuvered close to the stage. Val directed all his solos to her, horn aimed like an arrow at a bull's-eye. During intermission he passed up his usual ration of bourbon to hustle her in the hallway while her date waited in line at the soft-drink counter.

"This is it," he reported back happily to me. "It's all set for later. The big streetcar ride, green leas. Her name's Heather—you ever hear anything so right? I hate to ask this of you, man, but do you think you could double up with Tubbo tonight?"

We signed off at 12:30, and I watched Heather of the raven tresses saunter out arm-in-arm with her date, sending Val a lingering promissory glance over her shoulder.

I wouldn't see Val again until shortly after six that morning. I hardly slept, and understood now why Tubbo roomed alone. We shared a double bed in the back of the bus, and he took the top bunk, his head against the wall, his feet tucked under the seat. I took the bottom bunk, my head against the wall, my feet tucked under the seat. I noticed for the first time how deep-

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rubbing his hands, a high color in his face. "C'mon, I'll pop for coffee." There was a little outdoor terrace with tables bordering the highway, and we sat and waited to order.

"You know when I was last up at this time of morning?" He didn't wait for an answer. "I don't mean to be uncouth or anything, man, and I know this kid's somebody's daughter, but Jesus, a stray fresh young piece like that makes up for a lot of things. It was like... a first breath of spring. I'm turning the corner of forty, man. I don't know how many more lucky accidents of this quality I can count on..." He was grinning at me in a wistful boyish way, the taut lean face I remembered from an album jacket going to flesh, the eyes still direct but milder, reflective, the fires banked. I could smell the faint sour reek of booze through the lime after-shave lotion. Val had more than fifteen years on me, and I thought of all the road time he'd put in, the 300-mile hauls between gigs, the unrelenting night-to-night juicing, the tumbledown factory towns and greasy food and dirty laundry, catnaps in jouncing seats, the drafty halls and broken PA systems and indifferent hayseed crowds.

"Damn, man, I feel good!" he nearly shouted, warming his hands together, the muscles in his forearms rippling, the torso beneath the T-shirt thickened but still powerful, limber, despite the lapse of twenty-three boozy years since he'd won the Fall River high-school city championship in the 220-yard low hurdles. "I'll tell you something, man..." the exhilaration turning him garrulous. "Remember the letter you showed me last week from your mother, all the home-front news, your brother and cousins and guys you went to school with locked into their eight-to-five gigs, raising their little families and joining the PTA and the country club? Well, when those cats wind down and retire on their pensions, they won't even have the presence of mind, the... perspective, to look back at their lives and weep, man. But we'll still be on the move, hitting new towns and turning folks on. Know what I'm saying?" Val slapped his palm on the metal table. "I feel good, man!"

He was suddenly up and moving

briskly to the shoulder of the road dropped down, butt high and fired, test-rocking on the ball of his feet, body tensed in a crouch. I shaded my eyes as the eastern sky flared. A whoop escaped the coil unsprung and he was springing down the macadam border, shoulders low, charging, now the lithely scissoring like a ballet dancer another whoop and the legs now slicing air again, taking the bar hurdles in memory. The whoops fainter, the figure smaller and more precise, etched on the horizon. A minutive, stalwart, the Fall River Flash kicking up cinders, hurtling into a bloodred sky as the gong cheers crashed his ears.

**W**e worked our way across southern New York and western Pennsylvania in three weeks, then back to New York. Baggio's Casino, a sprawling barnlike structure, extended the water on massive pilings and separated from the main road by a stand of pines. The prospect of stationary weeks on the shores of an Adirondack mountain lake after a string of tank-town one-nighters like emerging on the border of Saginaw after a forced march through relieved swampland.

Alvie dressed us in ill-fitting, and-white striped blazers with ties and red straw boaters he'd picked up at a costume-rental shop in Saginaw; they made us look like a lanx of barber poles. The hours ball-breaking, 9:30 P.M. to 3:30 A.M. seven nights a week. In the early afternoon we'd wake groggy, eat our lunch in the canteen, wander down to the dock to swap paddle a canoe around. But most of the time we just fell out in whatever shade we could find and watched the chicks.

**T**en days into the gig the simpering end of the summer came to a boil. A group of housewares corporationers from Glens Falls had reserved the casino and grounds for an afternoon cookout, and management asked us to do a double session, noon and night. There would be twenty bucks extra for each of



ed out to be nowhere near  
gh.

ie conventioners began their  
ing early, just before noon. It  
already in the high eighties and  
ng up, sun blazing in a hazy  
e sky and not a breath stirring.  
c tables had been set out under  
pines along with charcoal grills  
egs of beer. We'd moved our in-  
ents onto the outside deck. Our  
protection from the sun was the  
boaters. Alvie wouldn't let us  
off the blazers or ties, and within  
n minutes of the opening up-  
o medley there was a wide circle  
eat saturating the planks around  
o's drums and his face had  
ed the color of a spoiled turnip.  
housewares folks, most of them  
eir middle years, went into high  
right off and stayed there, danc-  
up a storm—more frolic than  
e, actually, cavorting and sliding  
the pine needles, the men  
ed down to their undershirts  
their pants rolled up and the  
en barefooted, fanning them-  
s with their orange-and-white  
board hats, and hiking up their  
es—both sexes letting out lusty  
rs into the smoky breathless  
The lower the beer dropped in  
egs, the more abandoned and  
ied the dancers became. Alvie  
the tempos up, digging old flag-  
rs out of the book, Model T  
pers that bore the notation "Brite  
boom Chick."

two bells the temperature had  
ed into the low nineties and the  
and insects were bedeviling us.  
more bedraggled we grew, the  
er the picnickers' spirits soared; it  
s if some uncanny transference of  
zy were taking place. Though the  
ers had some benefit from the  
e, none of them was still a spring  
ten, and jumping around half-  
essed on full stomachs amid the  
and smoke rising from the char-  
fires, they looked like revelers  
ng at high noon in the pits of  
We were taking the sun head-on  
and the deck was a blast furnace.  
e watchdogged us—trying to  
en the reins—warning us not to  
ppy as we had a long way to go,  
casting emphatic looks at Val.  
we mostly ignored him; it was

close to open rebellion. He had been  
pushing Val most of the afternoon,  
calling numbers that stretched him  
out and tested his endurance; Val—  
growing more glassy-eyed as the gruel-  
ing day progressed but with a com-  
bative fire burning behind the  
glaze—bore up valiantly, meeting, if  
not especially enjoying, the challenge.

We played straight through to six-  
thirty, leaving those crazy picnickers  
clamoring for more. I remember the  
sun hanging big and low in the sky  
like a copper frying pan. After a break  
for supper and a fast shower, we  
moved back into the casino and start-  
ed in again. The heat had hardly let  
up at all, and by ten o'clock, even  
with the doors and windows all open,  
the casino was a steam bath, moths  
thick as leaves beating on the screens  
and flicking around the hurricane  
lamps, and fly swarms going to work  
on the bar buffet. During our breaks  
we got brews and took them outside  
under the trees to try to cool off, but  
after the second break Alvie told the  
bartenders to shut us off. Half the  
band was wasted and the music was  
growing rougher and more strident by  
the minute. Not that it mattered with  
all the noise and frenzy out on the  
floor.

It was during our third break, get-  
ting on toward midnight and the  
crowd showing no signs of thinning  
out, that the roof caved in and the  
shinola hit the fan. We were flaked  
out in our wet monkey suits under the  
pines trying to catch a breath of air,  
talking fitfully about our plans after  
the tour ended. Some of us had gigs  
lined up; others would be scuffling  
again, an ever renewing process.

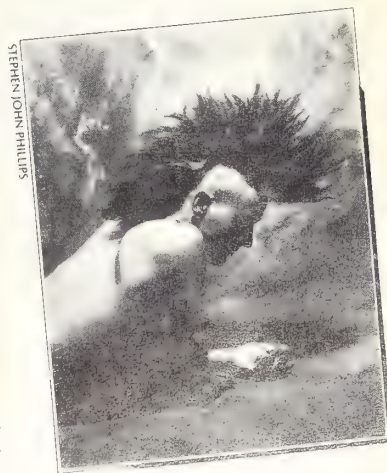
Val had been unaccustomedly si-  
lent for some time, sitting with his  
back against a tree trunk, his face  
sunken in thought and weariness,  
staring out over the water. We'd been  
playing steadily since noon, so allow-  
ing for the supper break we were going  
on our tenth hour. Alvie came out  
looking at his watch. We straggled to  
our feet and that's when the stuff hit  
the blades. Val, instead of joining us,  
strolled casually down the incline to  
the side of the casino and rested his  
head and his arms against the wall.  
looked like the stance some  
sumes when the cops are patting him

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down, except every bone in Val's body was sagging.

We started dragging ourselves in, some of us watching Val with curiosity and concern. Alvie turned and called, "Val, you coming?" And Val answered, his voice muffled but calm and matter-of-fact, "No, I don't think so, Alvie." Alvie stopped dead in his tracks and called back, a tiny tremor in his voice, "What'd you say?" What Val did then was to push himself off the wall like a boxer pushing off his opponent, step back a short ways, cock his right hand, and drive it clean through one of the basement windows. It made the same pleasant tinkling sound you hear when the wineglass gets smashed at a Jewish wedding. He held his hand up to his face—even in the half-dark you could see the blood beginning to pump—and said in that same eerie calm tone, but with a tiny note of triumph or satisfaction in it, "Looks like I won't be playing any more horn tonight." We stood stock-still, like a dumbstruck Greek chorus.

"For Christ sake, Valentine," Chickie said in a breathy voice. "Val, what'd you want to do a crazy thing like that for?" I said. The hand looked like it had just come down off the cross. "We've got to find a doctor for this." Val watched his own blood drip onto the pine needles with a kind of detached interest and said, "I think your instinct is correct, man." I took out my handkerchief and wrapped the hand as best I could. We walked around to the front of the casino—Alvie's voice calling after us, "On-stage, Ducks, let's go!"—and into the packed bar that was like a Dutch oven, people making way when they saw the blood-soaked cloth. One woman let out a stifled scream, her hand flying to her throat as if Godzilla himself had stepped off the silver screen onto the beautiful shores of Lake Laramie. I hollered for a doctor. "I have some Mercurochrome in my car," the lady who had screamed said, backing off. "I don't think we need any more red," Val told her. I was about to give it up and try in the casino when a small man in a rumpled Palm Beach suit pushed through and identified himself. He unwrapped the handkerchief and said, "Looks like it

went through a window." We were impressed by the instant diagnosis. Val grinned wanly at me and said, "I think we're in good hands, man—that was my hand, I thought, I'm sobbing like a baby. The doc told me to go into the john and wash it off while he fetched his bag from the car."

When the doctor returned he examined the hand, said it could be worse, applied disinfectant, and bandaged it with about ten yards of gauze and tape. "No more drinking tonight," he said, glancing briefly at Val's eyes, and told me to have someone look at the hand first thing in the morning, since it might need surgery. I said, "We've got three hours of music to play." He looked at our outfits for the first time and asked, "What does he play?" putting the question to me as if Val weren't there at all or his brains were scrambled, which for the moment might not have been far from the truth. "Trumpet," I said. "Right-handed?" I nodded. He was glancing interestedly back and forth between us. I watched the right-hand fingers move at his depressing imaginary valves. "He can't play the trumpet with that hand than he could run the 100-yard dash with a broken ankle," he said uncannily touching on Val's past. Then he closed up his bag and left.

Val studied his hand, wrapped a mummy's except for the fingers sticking out, and said, "I could play"—having regrets now, probably thinking of the impact on the rest of us as well as his standing with Alvie. The tour was almost over and he couldn't help wondering if he would have indulged in so theatrical a venture earlier in the summer; most likely he had closed the door on any further work with the Rhythm Ducks. In the slackness and exhaustion in his face now, the distant focus of his eyes, and told him to go back to his cabin and sleep it off; I'd try to smooth things over with Alvie.

I pushed through the casino crowd, stomping their feet and hollering for music, and told Alvie that he wouldn't be coming back tonight before I could offer excuses—the long day—he began fuming, sputtering about drunken music and prima donnas, his face under



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## The "New" PLO

### Or: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?

After more than 20 years of ostracism by most of the civilized world, Yasir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, has finally uttered the "magic words" demanded by the U.S. It didn't come easy, and he didn't get it quite right. But it was good enough for Secretary of State George Schultz who, "the words" having been spoken, declared the willingness of the U.S. to talk with the PLO. One wonders whether that surprising opening will bring peace in the Middle East any closer to realization.

### What are the facts?

■ Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, having wrung major concessions from Israel, promised that the U.S. would not deal with the PLO unless it fulfilled two conditions: (1) it would accept U.N. Resolutions 242 and 238; (2) it would recognize Israel's "existence". Congress added a third condition, namely that the PLO would renounce terrorism. Finally, after 20 years of obdurate resistance, Yasir Arafat, as spokesman for the PLO, did make those statements. Secretary Schultz decided therefore that the U.S. must establish contact with the PLO. Only a week earlier, the Secretary had refused Arafat a visa to enter the United States, because of his personal association with and personal responsibility for widespread terrorism all over the world.

■ What are the goals of the PLO, and is it likely that they have changed by the uttering of those three sentences? The PLO is a terror organization, created in 1964 by the Arab League. It has only one aim: the destruction of the State of Israel through force and violence. Any apparent deviation from this single-minded aim is a temporary tactical maneuver.

■ The basic charter of the PLO is the so-called "Palestinian National Covenant." Its main theme is that the State of Israel has no right whatever to exist. It states clearly that "Palestine...is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland," and that "the Arab-Palestinian people...reject all solutions that substitute for the total liberation of Palestine." Those PLO and Arab leaders who have from time to time ventured to propose a less inflexible approach have invariably paid with their lives for such deviation from PLO "orthodoxy".

■ The recent unilateral declaration by the PLO of a "Palestinian State with its capital in Jerusalem" on territory administered by and under control of Israel is an attempted step in that direction. The PLO was founded long before Israeli administration of Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza Strip. Its avowed purpose was then, has always been and continues to be, not the establishment of a Palestinian state, but the destruction of Israel proper.

Can the leopard change its spots? It does not seem likely. And it does not seem likely that the PLO, engaged in unrelenting terror since its creation 24 years ago, will ever become a force for peace, just because of the intonation of a few "magic phrases". It is comforting to think that peace in the Middle East can be achieved by bestowing respect only way to bring about peace in the Middle East is by direct negotiations between Israeli and representatives of the residents of the administered territories. Accord: a period of autonomy, after which the final disposition and status is decided by the people involved. The PLO cannot be a party to the peace process. Its charter calls for war and destruction and because terror and peace cannot exist together.

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white hair twisted and an angry  
like a dish of uncooked chicken  
We started up again, reaching  
into our Roaring Twenties  
—"Toot, Toot, Tootsie,"  
at'll I Do," "Mary Lou"—Alvie  
g over Val's lead, which was like  
ng in a Little Leaguer to pinch-  
or Ted Williams. We were all  
y well wrecked by now and just  
ing away, trying to get the night-  
over with.  
it a second fright was in store. I  
alerted first by a blast of sound  
ng from the far end of the casino,  
by Estelle breaking off with a  
of strangled cry in mid-vocal on  
k Home Again in Indiana" and  
ting to the floor. Alvie turned,  
his face collapsed like a bad cake.  
I had come back in wearing only  
yellow bathrobe and was advanc-  
through the crowd, horn canted  
ne rafters—the rolling, broad-  
tones meshing with the band—  
ingers partly free of the bloody  
age, which was playing out like  
off a fishing reel and trailing  
g the floor. A couple of women  
med, and people were shoving at  
other, backing out of the way. It  
a little like Moses, in the guise of  
riel, coming through the Red  
There was a three-foot stone  
pet separating the floor from the  
stand, stairs on one side. Val  
t bother with the stairs; he vault-  
nstage using his unbloodied left  
l without dropping a beat, then  
need on the mike, now prudently  
ted by Estelle. His eyes swept  
ly over me—the fire back in  
a, but a fire more like a crazed  
n tempered by a playful flickering  
or. And now the horn began to  
as he bent his knees and got his  
o into it, a big dense shoulder of  
d—Alvie, a confused half-smile  
is face, gingerly laying a hand on  
arm ("Easy now, Dad"), which  
flicked off, a muscle's reflex to a  
landing, as people yelled from the  
t to let him play. A few couples  
still dancing, but most had  
sed in toward the stand, suspect-  
they were hearing something they  
n't likely to hear again—some  
aps less transfixed by the music  
y the yellow robe and dusty bare  
and the flapping bloodstained



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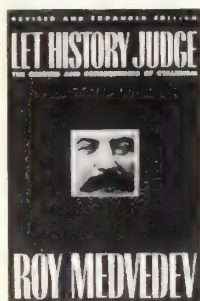
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bandage that danced around the stage with the movement of his body like a nervous snake molting.

With everyone laying out but piano, bass, and drums, Val entered his second chorus of "Indiana"—and entered it grandly, a way-back, joyous belling of sound, layer on layer, a carillon that filled every chink in the room, bounced off the rafters, and shook the joint. The pyrotechnics were formidable—broad tumbling cascades of notes interspersed with leaping broken-field spurts (Val taking the 220 hurdles again in his diard imagination); it was showboating, no question about it, but showboating in a classic mode, with authority and license, all the proper credentials on display, grand-tour performance, the drive and propulsion so irresistible all you could do was sit there with your mouth half-open and say to yourself, Goddamn, what good music!

"Catalona on a clearrrrr day!" shrieked the other strange one in our midst, Purvis with his moonstruck grin and a high shine of madness and glee in his pale eyes.

I stole a glance at Alvie. His expression was rapt, but it was a complicated face to read: Either he was caught up in the music and spectacle the same as everyone else, or he was temporarily paralyzed by this first-of-its-kind breakdown in his authority. He'd faced insubordination before, but nothing quite as dramatic or inspired, and had no tools for coping short of picking up a music stand and crashing it over Val's head. Meanwhile Shorty stealthily insinuated himself, the sinewy upper-register clarinet as spry and pesky as its player, skittering above, under, and around Val like a light-crazed moth circling a brass lampshade. Within moments the trombone had followed suit—Chickie joining the renegade, disavowing his second-in-charge authority—the broad tailgate slide supplying foundation and springboard that, in union with the goad of Shorty's feisty clarinet, catapulted Val to new heights, the whole casino ringing like a big brass bell as he stormed into yet another chorus, setting off explosive cries from the floor. But not even Val's lip could hold out forever. His

face and throat were slick with sweat, his eyes had a ragged shine as he flicked his glance at me, signaling was ready to take it out. I signaled others and Val banked the fires, heat draining from his horn as sweat and subtly as the warmth slipping from an autumn afternoon when first shadows fall; the pitch dropped and the tone swelled, grew vibrant and smoky, and on the tune's plaintive closing line (*When I dream of the moonlight on the Wabash...*) keening melancholy infused his horn, it slackened and softened—we slowed with him—and drifted out of tempo, the beat imperceptibly melting as he placed a jeweled cadence into the space above the crowd, a falling fall of supple notes as precise as the first pale stars in the evening sky.

The applause and shouts lifted Val low him as he matter-of-factly ejected his spit valve. At which point Alvie broke out of his trance, moved in. Smiling uncertainly, he placed a careful arm around Val's shoulder and tried to lead him to the stage. Val shook him off—not angry but just as he had earlier, as you twitch your shoulders to shake a gnat or a fly—and something in his gesture stifled the applause. The crowd quieted, absorbed in the men above them. Val walked down the side stage stairs and onto the deck—not looking at anyone, a look of far-off satisfied smile playing at the corners of his mouth as if he understood this was his swan song and had carried it off in style—moving with that sure limber athlete's stride a small swagger to it, Tubbo supplying a humorous martial roll and rattat. For a few choruses the booze became pure fuel, burned clean, leaving no residue but an honest earned film of sweat.

The last I saw of Val that night was the yellow robe and mucked-up bandage gliding off through the pine trees like the raiment of a valiant wounded ghost.

He wasn't in the cabin when I came back at three-thirty. His clothes were gone from the hangers, the scuffed leather bag missing from under his bunk. "Looks like he's read your mind again," Alvie said.

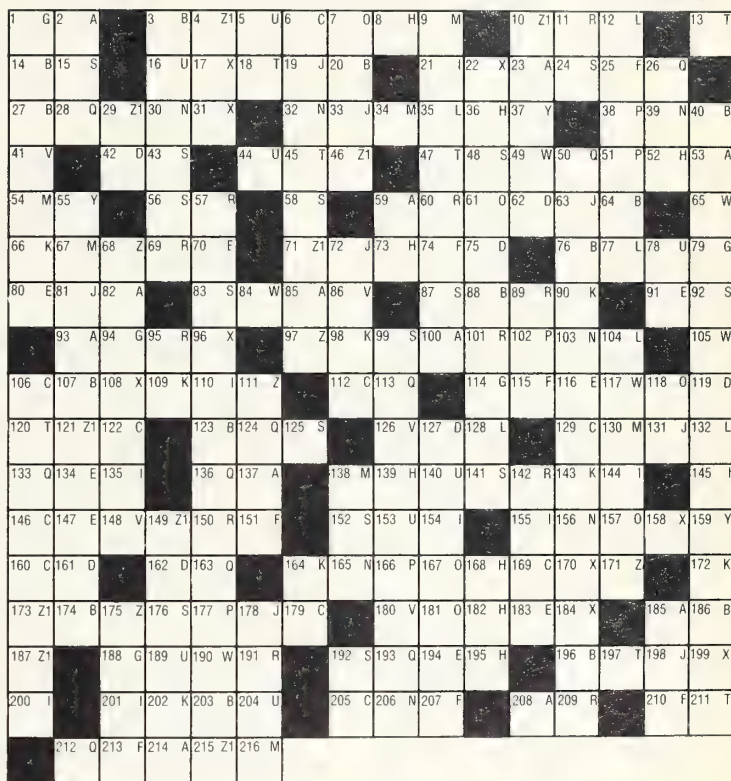


# DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 78

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 64.



## CLUES

## WORDS

A. "\_\_\_\_are little room" (2 wds.; Housman, *A Shropshire Lad*, II)

185 53 137 208 23  
82 59 85 100  
2 214 93

B. 1948 song by Morey Amsterdam, Jeri Sullavan, and Paul Baron (2 wds. and hyp.)

203 107 196 3 174  
20 64 76 27 123 40 186  
88 14

C. Manicuring tool (2 wds.)

122 146 160 106 179 112 205 169  
6 129

D. Extreme satisfaction

161 75 62 42 119 127 162

E. Vesicant liquid used in chemical warfare

134 147 183 80 194 91 116 70

F. Forbear, desist

151 210 74 207 115 213 25

G. Island off the S coast of England

114 1 79 94 188

H. Study of the effective use of language

52 36 182 195 73 168 139 8

I. "Here once the farmers stood" (Emerson, "Concord Hymn")

110 144 21 145 200 201 155 135  
154

J. Border on

81 19 63 198 72 131 33 178

K. Prudent

172 143 98 164 66 90 202 109

L. Island, also called Rapa Nui, belonging to Chile

128 132 104 35 12 77

M. Old French dance

67 9 138 34 54 216 130

N. Fruitful, copious, abundant

39 32 156 30 165 206 103

O. Peninsula of SW Europe

7 61 167 118 181 157

P. Descriptive word or phrase

166 177 51 102 38

Q. Stormy NE or NNE wind

50 193 212 163 133 28 113 26  
136 124

R. Coinciding in time

89 191 101 150 11 69 95 142  
209 60 57

S. Am. metaphysician (1703-58; *Freedom of the Will*; full name)

192 24 92 87 141 152 56 43  
48 125 83 55 176 15 99

T. Carry through

120 47 13 11 1 24

U. Thirteen-chapter book of the O.T.

204 140 190 1 1 1 1

V. Turn outward

1 150 1 1 1 1 1

W. Weak, lanky

6 1 1 1 1 1 1

X. Else

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Y. Marshal of France (1769-1834; for novel)

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Z. First apt

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

1. 1925 novel

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

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# PUZZLE

## Light Exercise

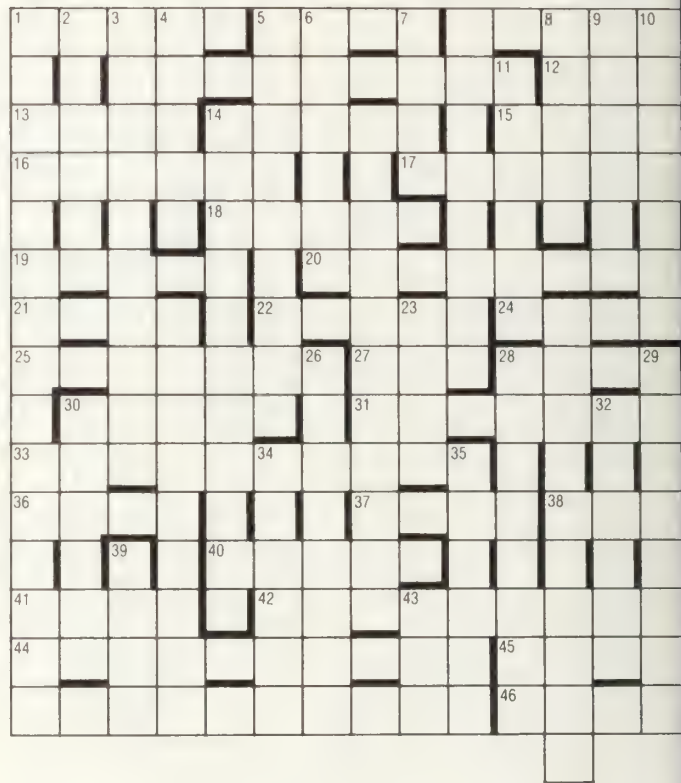
by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

**E**leven of the "lights" (diagram entries) are unclued but self-descriptive. Four of them are phrases of two or more words, one of them a sports term.

Clue answers include five capitalized words. Less than common answers appear at 5D, 23D, 26D, and 34D. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 64.

### Across

1. Memorable times English remove from memory (5)
5. Female very upset to pay the bill (4)
12. Big laugh right before row (4)
13. French river heading away from Sound (4)
14. The French police fiscal mix-up, but no answer seen (5)
15. Beautiful woman goes along with our illusions (5)
16. Tie up legally—could this be said to be the precursor to *Story of O*? (6)
17. Poles due to be deceiving (3)
18. Willing but ultimately weak (5)
19. A pad replaced, tailor's beginning to make suiting (5)
20. Sweep between streets—most odd (9)
21. Guild almost destroyed unusual fruit (4)
22. Occasions when there's no time for ties (5)
24. Notices with returned checks (3)
25. Question in Senate about limits of Chile's fruit (7)
27. Almost mechanical degenerate (3)
28. I'd concluded Greek is grating (4)
30. Advanced title with Italian or French wine (5)
31. Sat holding broken gun, looking like a boxer (8, *hyph.*)
33. I got no sole at sea, but I know my port (10)
36. Railcar for footloose hobo? (4)
37. Protection provided by some legislators (4)
38. Track shorebird (4)
40. Lucifer's counterpart (5)
41. County has a large source of fuel (4)
42. Managing is smart when holding East custody (10)
44. Ted ate tuna chopped thin (10)
45. Assign responsibility for church emergency (5)
46. Not satisfied with menu, disrupted back of restaurant (5)



### Down

2. Precipitated getting mixed up with Left in Ireland (6)
3. Dundee, e.g., is a natural resort (10)
4. Surprise: snake eats tail (5)
5. Cruel extremes of Ayatollah even contracted by Arab peasants (9)
6. African antelopes or wading bird (6)
7. Peg's drunk up a bit of scotch (4)
8. Become partial, finally, to rumble (5)
9. Nasty insect one's taken in Canadian lake (6)
10. Eastern's reorganization is serious (7)
11. North's shredded plant's defenses (6)
23. No American shows common sense in England (4)
26. Stag tail could be shaped like an arrow (8)
29. Bizarre behavior I've brought back in Charleston, e.g. (8)
30. Dry red wine makes me run to a great extent (6)
32. Significant contributor to communist alignment! (6)
34. Middle of stomach—total component of cow's digestive system (6)
35. Siamese attack said to produce censorious speech (6)
39. What sounds like an inventor? Yes (4)
43. Virgin's coming up with glandular breakout (3)

**Contest Rules:** Send completed diagram with name and address to "Light Exercise," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. Winners' names will be printed in the August issue. Winners of the April puzzle, "Single Occupancy," are C. Laughlin, Richmond, Virginia; Anne Laskowich, West Paterson, New Jersey; and Deborah N. Mauger, Lexington, Massachusetts.



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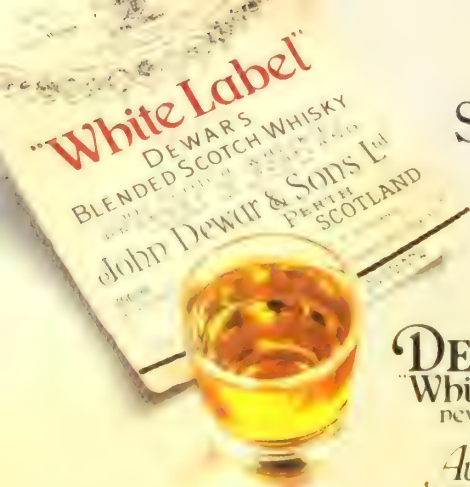
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